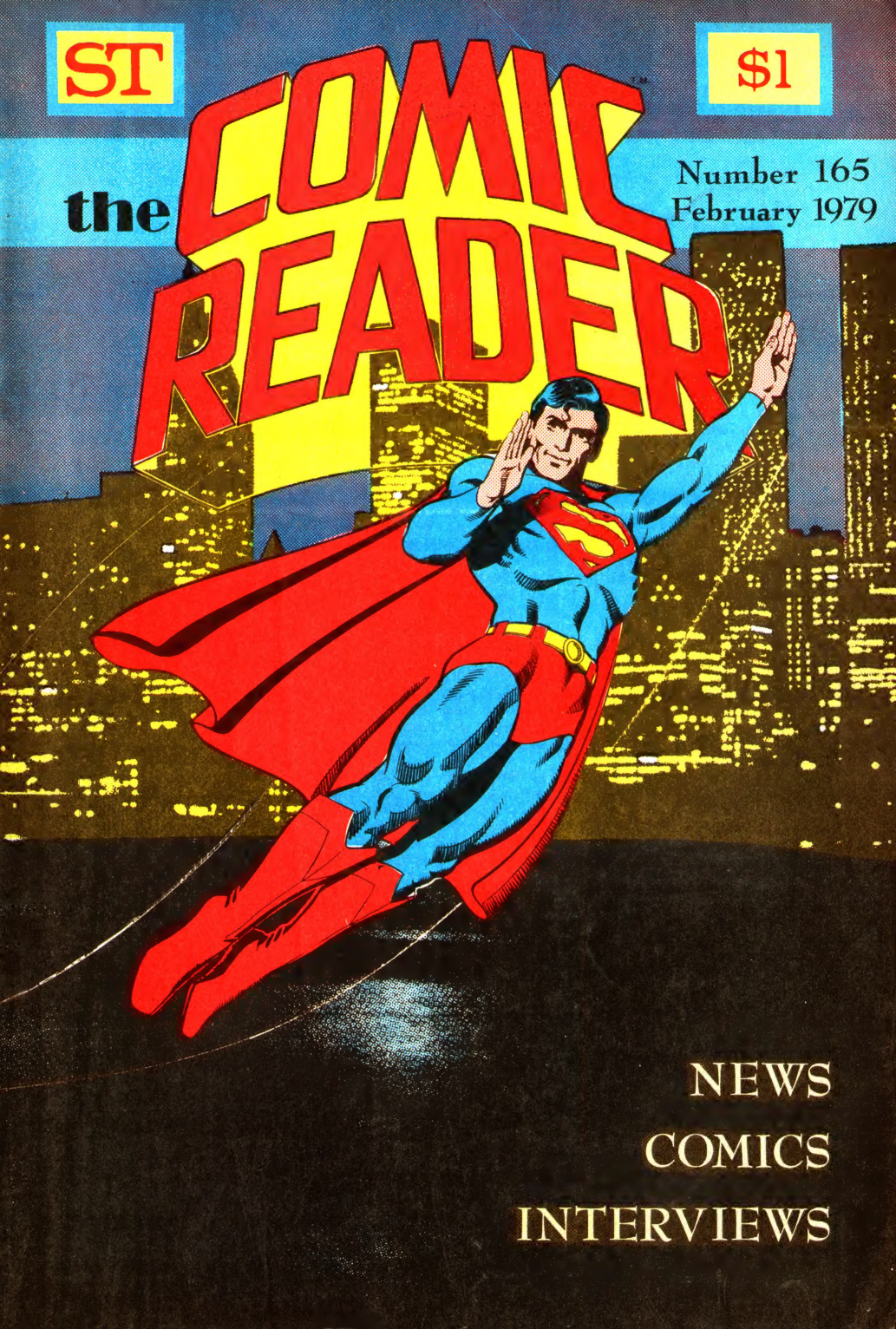
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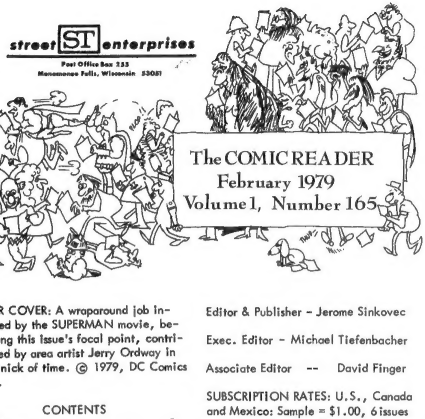

The COMIC READER
February 1979
Volume 1, Number 165

R COVER: A wraparound job in-
ed by the SUPERMAN movie, be-
ng this issue's focal point, contri-
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nick of time. © 1979, DC Comics

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ADERS: The deadline for acceptance
Alley Award ballots has been extend-
to February 2nd because of the late
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DC News

"Things are picking up," at DC according to Jack C. Harris, and to prove it, DC plans significant additions to their line beginning in May.

May will see the release of the first issue of the revived SECRETS OF HAUNTED HOUSE, edited by Harris. It will be #15. It will be monthly, of course.

Also in May, DC SPECIAL SERIES #17 will appear: THE ORIGINAL SWAMP THING SAGA Part 3. Issues #5-7 will be reprinted in $1.00 format. It will be followed in July by the revival of SWAMP THING as a monthly

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(with #25). Paul Levitz is editor.

June will see the addition of a new dollar book to alternate with G.I. COMBAT in the war market. The untitled book will be edited by Murray Boltinoff with features yet unchosen.

Then, in July, two more dollar books will be added to the line. The project that began as a STRANGE ADVENTURES revival will appear with a new title and will center on science-fiction by people like Steve Ditko, Denny O'Neil, Mike Barr, Bob Rozakis and J.M. DeMatteis.

The other dollar book will be a regular series titled 5 STAR SUPER-HERO SPECTACULAR after the first issue of the DC SPECIAL SERIES in '77. Tentative strips to be included are WONDER WOMAN, GREEN ARROW & BLACK CANARY, BLACK LIGHTNING, SHAZAM! and PLASTIC MAN. Ross Andru will edit. The above contents should give you some indication of another move.

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HEX WESTERN TALES will debut with Ross Andru as editor. It will be bi-monthly and will feature, amongst its 96 pages, reprints of JONAH HEX and probably other strips from DC's past westerns. The digests will cost 95¢.

The other regular digest also appears in June. THE BEST OF DC, announced last August, will debut with SUPERMAN stories. The next three issues will be BATMAN, SUPER FRIENDS (since the digests are aimed at a somewhat younger age group) and RUDOLPH (as the digests are taking the place of the tabloid format). Julius Schwartz will edit the super-hero reprints.

Two one-shot digests will appear in July. One is a WAR TALES digest edited by Paul Levitz and drawing from the super-hero files is the other,

SUPERMAN is the focus of many revivals and a lot of reversion of characters to situations more in line with that of the SUPERMAN movie. For example, the adventures of Jimmy Olsen and Lois Lane in SUPERMAN FAMILY will be focused on Daily Planet activities, and there may even be a return to the paper by Clark Kent on a part-time basis. Len Wein's first issue (#336), out next month, features the return of The Rose And The Thorn, and #337 features a deadly coalition of Super-foes: Bizarro, Brainiac, Toyman, Terra Man and Metallo. The 40th anniversary issue of SUPERMAN will feature a story entitled "Let My People Grow!" which involves the enlargement of the bottle city of Kandor. Whether this is the June or July issue is something we don't know.

WORLD'S FINEST COMICS will revert to monthly, 40¢, 32 page size, and Julius Schwartz will become editor. Five of its strips will transfer to 5 STAR, with the HAWKMAN strip returning to limbo. WORLD'S FINEST was the poorest seller of the hero dollar books. Since costs have risen, ads will be added to the dollar books as of June, cutting story pages to 51 and eliminating back cover art.

WORLD OF KRYPTON will appear as a three-shot series in April, May and June, with E. Nelson Bridwell as editor of the Paul Kupperberg-Howard Chaykin-Murphy Anderson stories featuring Jor-El and Lara.

And the digest series may finally see the light of day come June. Two regular bi-monthly titles and two summer one-shots will appear during the summer.

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In June, the first issue of JONAH

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SECRET ORIGINS OF SUPER-HEROES. This one will include some of the few new material pages as it tentatively features a new, redefined origin story for WONDER WOMAN.

Jack C. Harris will be taking over HOUSE OF MYSTERY from Paul Levitz with #276, the January, 1980 issue, thus consolidating the mystery books under one editor.

DC recently reinventoried and organized their storehouse of old artwork and have begun the arduous task of returning it to the people that created it when known. Much unpublished material, from the '40s to the present, has been unearthed, which has been photocopied for possible future use. Look for a lot of original artwork to appear in the marketplace later this year.

The Clock King will return to menace his old foe Green Arrow in the latter's strip in WORLD'S FINEST #257. In the same issue, Captain Marvel reestablishes unwanted contact with an old foe redubbed The Invincible Man.

Other issues of WORLD'S FINEST include a couple of Superman and Batman tales: one, by Denny O'Neil, Jose Garcia Lopez and Dick Giordano, is a sequel to #256's "Werewolf Of Krypton" tale; the other, by Gerry Conway, is entitled "What Ever Happened To Firestorm?" and probably features you-know-who as guest-star. In the issue with the latter story, Denny O'Neil will take on Conway's regular features, GREEN ARROW and HAWKMAN. Conway has developed a new job for Green Arrow as well. And the two heroes will team-up in WORLD'S FINEST #259, courtesy of Conway.

Captain Marvel, Jr. will be battling his arch-enemy Captain Nazi in

ther WORLD'S FINEST story.

In ACTION #496, Superman picks a deadly germ in Kandor and acts carrier when he returns to Earth. orplanetary hero Vartox (who debuted ouple of years back) will be featured two-parter, and another issue will ture the tale of a Superman Club ch leaves a chair empty at each eting in the hope that a certain celaty will make an appearance.

DC COMICS PRESENTS, which ms to have more scheduling probs than your average title, has had story line-up changed again. #10, ch was to feature Superman and ter Miracle, will instead feature Superman-Sgt. Rock (with Super- hurled back into time to World II, Robert Kanigher please note), #11 picking up where #10 leaves with Superman and Hawkman. That ves the Mr. Miracle story, as well he long delayed Black Lightning is-, on deck for other issues. Cary es, Joe Staton and Jack Abel did h issues.

King Faraday, erstwhile star of NGER TRAIL in the '50s and most ently seen in the two I -- SPY! isof SHOWCASE, returns to aid Batin #312-313 of the latter's magae. The villain of the piece is Twoe, who has stolen -- what else? -- inary code.

The SHOWCASE issue of DEADN that was never published will apr instead in ADVENTURE #464. In t same issue, Wildcat is the focus he Justice Society adventure.

Robin's origin is retold for the t time in a long time in DETECTIVE 4 in "Return Of The Flying Gray-" by Jack C. Harris, Kurt Schaffenger and Frank Chiaramonte. Don wton and Dan Adkins illustrate the d BATMAN story in that issue writby Denny O'Neil, and Len Wein Steve Ditko contribute another MON adventure.

Ric Estrada will be putting in a st-appearance in THE UNEXPECTED 2's "The Face Of Abel" -- which, ncidentally, he drew.

A change of direction for GREEN NTERN is in the offing which indes new super-villains and a new man in his life called Kari Limbo, o has "second sight." Joe Staton l Dave Hunt did the fill-in artwork #117.

Gerry Conway has created a new up of Legion of Super-Heroes foes led The League Of Assassins, enmpassing Lazon, The Silver Slasher, Titania, Neutrax, Blok and Mist Master, each of whom believes the Legion is responsible for the destruction of their galaxy.

Mike Grell, who is attempting to catch up enough on his WARLORD schedule so that he can return to inking his own work again, plans to investigate the connection between Skartaris and Atlantis in future issues. This, however, will probably involve neither Aquaman or Lori Lemaris, as Grell is against tying in his character with the DC universe.

The origins of the Wonder Twins are slated to appear in SUPER FRIENDS #21. Author Nelson Bridwell promises Kronos and Mirror Master as villains of upcoming issues.

Pa Kent tries to measure up to his foster son's real father in SUPERMAN FAMILY #196's Superboy story. Given that Jor-El was his planet's greatest scientist and civic leader as well, he has his work cut out for him. Also in that issue, the Earth II Superman characters go through change as Daily Planet (nee Star) editor George Taylor's retirement has Clark Kent and Perry White, the paper's top reporters, vying for his job.

E.R. Cruz's first JONAH HEX issue will be #25 now, and he'll be alternating with Luis Dominguez on the book.

Wonder Woman will be leaving NASA briefly to return to the United Nations in an upcoming issue.

Ultraa, formerly Earth-Prime's only super-hero, will appear in another issue of JUSTICE LEAGUE OF AMERICA. A new villain called The Unmerged One is also set to appear.

The Atom will appear with Batman in BRAVE AND THE BOLD #152 drawn by Jim Aparo, so Don Newton will draw the Dr. Fate team-up. Other team-ups on tap include Metamorpho, Green Arrow and Red Tornado.

Although where exactly it will appear is still anyone's guess, a Flash-Green Lantern team-up is being planned.

Jose Delbo is pinch-hitting on the artwork on the WONDER WOMAN strip in ADVENTURE #464.

Bob Rozakis and George Tuska are preparing an ALFRED story for DETECTIVE COMICS.

GHOSTS #77 will include a ten page Steve Ditko story.

An old CHALLENGERS OF THE UNKNOWN villain will appear in a future issue of WONDER WOMAN.

Finally, to add to the depression caused by the disappointing spread of disco,"music" on the radio, DC has sent their two top heroes to their aural demise. Superman gets to hustle in "Super Disco Fever" in SUPERMAN FAMILY #196, while Batman hopefully deports himself respectably in "The Disco Of Death," with Flash in tow, in BRAVE AND THE BOLD #151. Let's hope that Earth-1 Isn't cursed with their own Chic, K.C. and the Sunshine Band or Village People, for our heroes' sake.

Marvel News

Marvel's yearly reorganization, which began late last year with the cancellation of the Hanna-Barbera titles, three reprint books and NOVA and THE INVADERS, as well as the earlier discontinuance of THE HUMAN FLY, continues. Thus far, we've mentioned five new titles: MACHINE MAN, MAN-THING, THE SUB-MARINER, KING CONAN, and HOWARD THE DUCK Magazine. Two more have been announced -- but ten titles have gotten the axe.

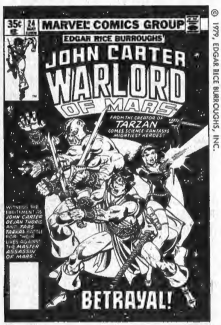
TOMB OF DRACULA, which had been set to end with Marv Wolfman, Gene Colan and Tom Palmer's last issue (#72), then revived with Mike Fleisher as writer, has again been cancelled. #69, apparently, was the final issue. The material for the next two books will appear this spring as a TOMB OF DRACULA ANNUAL, and then will return to the black and white format it enjoyed during the days of DRACULA LIVES! The new TOMB OF DRACULA Magazine will be bi-monthly and will continue to be by Wolfman, Colan and

Palmer. SATANA, by Wolfman's proposed successor, Mike Fleisher, will be the back-up strip, as drawn by Mike Vosburg.

CAPTAIN MARVEL ends with this month's issue, #62. However, the prepared issues which will wind up dangling plot-threads will appear in April. under the revived auspices of MARVEL SPOTLIGHT, again by Roger McKenzie and Pat Broderick. Several issues will appear, although the number has yet to be determined for certain.

THE BLACK PANTHER is discontinued with #15 (out this month) of his own book. Three or four further issues (including the Wind Eagle explanation) will appear in MARVEL PREMIERE, beginning with #49 or 50.

MS. MARVEL is gone as of #23, out last month. Carol Danvers, though, will still be around as she is slated to be sworn into THE AVENGERS' membership this month.



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RED SONJA concludes her run with #15, also out this month. Future adventures already plotted by Roy Thomas will appear instead in THE SAVAGE SWORD OF CONAN.

THE INVADERS will end with #40, out this month, instead of the previously announced #42. The two completed issues will appear in an INVADERS ANNUAL, out this spring.

JOHN CARTER, WARLORD OF MARS winds up with #24. However, it is not certain whether the JOHN CARTER ANNUAL scheduled for May will appear as planned.

GODZILLA's last rampage will be #24, out in April. The cancellation is due to contractual disagreements with Toho Productions, and it leaves

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Here's a chance to compare the original version of a cover drawing by Al Milgrom and Steve Leialoha with the actual cover mock-up prepared by the Marvel production staff.

Marvel with a couple of Steve Ditko-drawn issues. Plans call for them to appear in one of the try-out books, possibly under the name FIN FANG FOOM (made famous in the old FANTASY MASTERPIECES title). (Ditko's familiarity with Japanese monster comics dates back to the early '60s Charlton books GORGO and REPTISAURUS.)

And finally, Marvel's last two westerns, though both were reprint titles, end up on boot hill. KID COLT OUTLAW, which, except for a small period in 1968-1969, was published continuously since 1948, finally bites the dust with #229, out last month. And RAWHIDE KID, which has been running continuously since 1960, heads for his last round-up with #151.

With these cancellations comes the announcement that Marvel will

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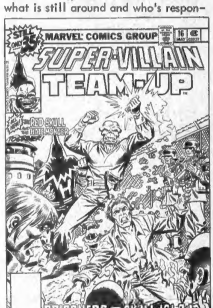
be joining DC in the 40¢ arena as of those comics listed in this issue (May cover dates). "We held out as long as we could," says Roger Stern, "Hey, we nearly made it to Spring."

In case you're as uncertain as to what is still around and who's respon-



sible, we've included a chart on page 6 for your edification.

Rick Marschall's new project division has been working on a major plunge into the mass magazine market for Marvel with what can be most easily described as, "Marvel's version of HEAVY METAL," although Marschall is quick to add, "Marvel's will be understandable." Essentially, it will be 64 to 80 pages monthly at $1.50, combining comics, fiction, illustrated fiction and separate illustrations. Its working title is the melodramatic "Project X" but the final newsstand title is likely to be ODYSSEY. The contents

MARVEL COMICS GROUP as of January, 1979		
Title	Frequency	Editor [Writer]
60¢ Group		
THE AMAZING SPIDER-MAN	Monthly	Marv Wolfman [Marv Wolfman]
THE AVENGERS	Monthly	Roger Stern [David Michelinie]
BATTLESTAR GALACTICA	Monthly	Jim Shooter/Mark Gruenwald [Roger McKenzie]
CAPTAIN AMERICA	Monthly	Roger Stern [Roger McKenzie]
CONAN THE BARBARIAN	Monthly	Roy Thomas [Roy Thomas]
DAREDEVIL	Bi-monthly	Allen Milgrom [Mary Jo Duffy]
THE DEFENDERS	Monthly	Allen Milgrom [Ed Hannigan]
DOCTOR STRANGE	Bi-monthly	Allen Milgrom [Ralph Macchio]
FANTASTIC FOUR	Monthly	Marv Wolfman [Marv Wolfman]
GHOST RIDER	Bi-monthly	Roger Stern [Roger McKenzie]
THE INCREDIBLE HULK	Monthly	Allen Milgrom [Roger Stern]
IRON MAN	Monthly	Roger Stern [David Michelinie]
MACHINE MAN	Bi-monthly**	Marv Wolfman [Marv Wolfman]
MAN-THING	Bi-monthly**	? [Michael Fleisher]
MARVEL PREMIERE	Bi-monthly	Roger Stern [David Michelinie]+
MARVEL SPOTLIGHT	Bi-monthly	Roger Stern [Doug Moench]+
MARVEL SUPER-HEROES	Bi-monthly	Reprints
MARVEL TALES	Monthly	Reprints
MARVEL TEAM-UP	Monthly	Allen Milgrom [Chris Claremont]
MARVEL TWO-IN-ONE	Monthly	Roger Stern [Mary Jo Duffy]
MASTER OF KUNG FU	Monthly	Roger Stern [Doug Moench]
THE MICRONAUTS	Monthly	Allen Milgrom [Bill Mantlo]
POWER MAN	Bi-monthly	Allen Milgrom [Mary Jo Duffy]
SGT. FURY	Bi-monthly	Reprints
SHOGUN WARRIORS	Monthly	Allen Milgrom [Doug Moench]
THE SPECTACULAR SPIDER-MAN	Monthly	Allen Milgrom [Bill Mantlo]
SPIDER-WOMAN	Monthly	Roger Stern [Mark Gruenwald]
SPIDEY SUPER STORIES	Monthly	A. J. Hays/Deborah November [Jim Salicrup]+
STAR WARS	Monthly	Archie Goodwin [Archie Goodwin]
THE SUB-MARINER	Bi-monthly**	? [?]
SUPER-VILLAIN TEAM-UP	Annual	Allen Milgrom [Peter Gillis]
TARZAN, LORD OF THE JUNGLE	Monthly	Allen Milgrom [Bill Mantlo]
THOR	Monthly	Roy Thomas [Roy Thomas]
X-MEN	Monthly	Roger Stern [Chris Claremont]
50¢ Group		
KING CONAN	Quarterly	Roy Thomas [Roy Thomas]
THOR THE MIGHTY	Quarterly	Roy Thomas [Roy Thomas]
WHAT IF?	Bi-monthly	Roy Thomas [Don Glut]+
ANNUALS	Sixteen*	Various
Magazines		
CRAZY	Monthly	Paul Lalkin [Various]
HOWARD THE DUCK	Bi-monthly	Rick Marschall [Bill Mantlo]
THE HULK!	Bi-monthly [Color]	Rick Marschall [Doug Moench]
MARVEL PREVIEW	Quarterly	Rick Marschall [Various]
A MARVEL SUPER SPECIAL	Six* [Color]	Rick Marschall [Various]
IZZAZZ	Monthly	Jeff Lewis [Archie Goodwin - STAR WARS]
THE SAVAGE SWORD OF CONAN	Monthly	Roy Thomas [Roy Thomas]
TOMB OF DRACULA	Bi-monthly	Rick Marschall [Marv Wolfman]
Tabloid		
MARVEL TREASURY EDITION	Bi-monthly	Reprints

* - Approximate number per year ** - Not yet scheduled + - Creative team changes with project featured

quite likely to be comprised of work people outside Marvel's regular staff, Marschall has toured Europe for con- utions. The launch date is still up the air.

Meanwhile, back to more mun- ne matters: Last issue, I listed the issues of the Hanna-Barbera books. parently, my final issue for DYNO- TT was in error. The last issue I n is #6, and that was the last one we ed. Does anyone know for sure?

George Perez will return to inter- ior pencils on THE X-MEN ANNUAL.

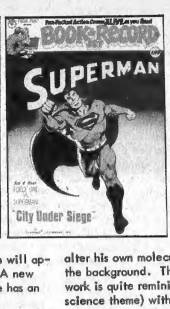
Rudy Nebres will henceforth do the color finishes and inks for the lead strip in THE HULK! Gene Colan has drawn a short HULK adventure for that magazine.

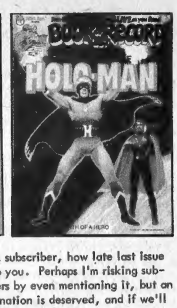
Steven Grant is writing a story that will finally tie up the secrets of OMEGA THE UNKNOWN for a future issue or two of THE DEFENDERS.

Doug Moench is now the writer for the MARVEL SUPER SPECIAL to feature THE ROLLING STONES.

Gene Colan will be returning to his old position as permanent artist for DOCTOR STRANGE.

Howard Chaykin is pencilling a two-parter for THE MICRONAUTS.





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And a new female villain will appear to plague Spider-Man. A new character she may be, but she has an old name: The Black Cat.

Et Al

It's been a long time since we last mentioned them, but Peter Pan Records continues to produce their Book And Record Sets. PR-33 through PR-36 have appeared, and they are:

SUPERMAN No. PR-33: "The Man From Krypton" drawn by Rich Buckler and Dick Giordano. The origin story is retold (again), this time in the first person. Lois Lane has brown hair (but then, so does Margot Kidder).

SUPERMAN No. PR-34: "City Under Siege" drawn by Ross Andru and Dick Giordano. Clark and Jimmy go on a fishing trip at the same time terrorists try to extort money from Metropolis with an A-bomb.

WONDER WOMAN No. PR-35: "The Secret Of The Magic Tiara" drawn by Rich Buckler and Dick Giordano. A man gains possession of Wonder Woman's tiara -- and enslaves her. (Incidentally, WW gets out of a death-trap in a way similar to that of Superman in the SUPERMAN movie; evidentally, DC didn't edit this story.)

THE AMAZING ADVENTURES OF HOLO-MAN No. 1 (PR-36): "Birth Of A Hero" by (writers) Vincent Fusco, Donald Kasen, Jason Fusco, Barry Van Name, Donald White, Joe Giella and Audrey Hirschfeld and (art) Joe Giella. Giella and Bob Larkin did the cover. Edited by Barry Van Name. This is the first part of what presumably will be a series of this original hero. Dr. James Robinson is involved in a holographic accident caused by sabotage and transformed into Holo-Man by another dimensional "friend" called Laserman, who gives him a "holodisc" which must be recharged every twelve hours to give him his powers to create holographic images, travel at light speed and through dimensions and to alter his own molecules to blend into the background. The Joe Giella artwork is quite reminiscent (as is the science theme) with early '60s DC comics. The project, which I am certain we mentioned a long while back (but which I can't find, unfortunately) is copyrighted by something called Wavelength Holographics, so the book may be an attempt on the part of some scientific firm to spread the word about holograms. Something to watch.

Recent current releases of STAR HAWKS indicate that Gil Kane is receiving some inking help. December and January daily strips have been inked by Howard Chaykin, and Sundays during that period seem to bear the mark of Ernie Colon.

Ernie Bushmiller, creator-artist of NANCY, seems to have gone into retirement, with strips of the last two months being periodically replaced by someone else's work. The change is evident from the differences in inking, lettering and perspective, and the subtle fact that "Bushmiller" doesn't appear on the strip anymore.

John Burns, artist on the derivative SEEKERS strip (that appeared in GAZETTE #95-232), will take over the strip that influenced SEEKERS, Peter O'Donnell's MODESTY BLAISE, as of the episodes printed in Britain in late '78. Enrique Romero decided to leave the strip.

TCR Message

Among the many proverbial statements I've learned to number among the truthful: "Grass won't grow in December unless you live in Tasmania," "Never eat anything bigger than your head," "The only time your car runs right is when you try to demonstate what's wrong with it," and "The mail don't go through," I think the applicable one in this case would be, "If something can go wrong, Street Enterprises will make sure that they're in the way." (Michael's Law) You know, if you're a TCR subscriber, how late last issue got to you. Perhaps I'm risking subscribers by even mentioning it, but an explanation is deserved, and if we'll never be numbered among the most brilliant businessmen, we do try to be as fair as possible.

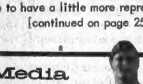
TCR #164 was being prepared about a month before its mailing date with no delays and everything pretty well on schedule. The hope was that we'd get the completed, bound and wrapped issues before December 15th and have them mailed out second class by the end of the week. Then, things started to fall apart. The bound issues got back the week before Christmas (the 19th) and the bindery informed us that there would be an additional 10-day to two week delay for the wrapped subscribers' copies. We got them, sure enough, a few days after Christmas. After reassembling our greatly altered subscription files (combining TCR and the GAZETTE and GUARDIAN subscriptions took over six weeks up to that point), we were about to mail the issues when the post office rejected our entry for second class postage (our indicia title not matching the cover title), which meant that everything had to be unbundled, the postage notation crossed out and stamped bulk rate. Unfortunately, as you might know, nature decided to intervene at the same time, and our two man operation quickly became a one man operation as my car picked that particular time to unsubtly ask for a $250 tune-up and defrosting. To make a long story extremely frustrating, our on-schedule issue was mailed January 3rd. A great way to attempt to sell a change in format and cost increase, wasn't it?

Consequently, this issue is at least one week behind our original planned schedule since it now takes us a bit longer to put an issue together than when we started and I typed up issues over the weekend, in between our two weeklies. Our printer has assured us that the delays in binding and wrapping have been eliminated, and, if so, this issue should be in your hands via second class mail at about the reg-

time. Unfortunately, as I type
e words, nature again has stomped
area with about two feet of snow
nough to prevent my mailman from
g up to that old oath they always
e -- so I'm keeping my fingers
sed in the hopes that our plans are
gain changed. I hope I don't
hit by a train tomorrow.

On to lighter things. Our planned
int of Paul Levitz' interview, con-
ed by England's COMIC MEDIA
VS editor Richard Burton, is featured
in, as are the expected review of
ERMAN, THE MOVIE, as well as
mmary of my feelings toward Super-
the comic book character and com-
ts about Michael Fleisher and
ot Maggin's recent books on the
of Steel. Because of this, and
e taken by the regular departments,
letters section and fanzine review
mn have again lost out. Space
rations also prevented our printing
two of Paulette Carroll's ASTERIX
oslum, all of which I plan to get
the next issue. BEN CASEY by
l Adams and POPEYE by Elzie Se-
join our GAZETTE section, as well
oll SUPERMAN and BATMAN incre-
ts.

One last thing: Because of the late-
of last issue's mailing, we've ex-
ed the deadline on acceptable Alley
rd ballots to February 2nd with the
of still getting the winners into
March issue. We've received about
ballots at this date, and we would
to have a little more representative
[continued on page 25]



Well, it's out, and my views pretty
get summed up in the review fol-
ing this short column. SUPERMAN,
MOVIE is doing good business, ac-
ling to VARIETY, with three weeks'
ness at the 113 theatres VARIETY
eys totaling $13,500,000. Since
's a portion of the 500 theatre gross
he country, it looks as though it'll
big moneymaker, alright... Did
catch the "in" joke in SUPERMAN
n Lois' car pulls into the gas station,
ns of "Give A Little Bit" by SUPER-
p (get it?) are heard... The Sal-
s sold their foreign profit rights to
ner Bros. for $15 million, so WB'll
aking everything off of the film in
rest of the world... SUPERMAN
been named in the preliminary Os-
voting in four technical categories:
Editor, Original Score, Original
("Can You Read My Mind?") and
d, which only means it's in the semi-
ls in those categories...Robert Towne's
YSTOKE is still on Warner Bros.'
list of projects for '79-'80, to be shot in Africa with "a high budget." That's the new Tarzan film, in case you've forgotten ... DC won that suit over the use of the name Daily Planet... Sherry Jackson is starring in a new syndicated pilot for a BRENDA STARR series... Disney says they will never release their feature cartoons to TV or Home Box Office, obviously because of the videotaping suit they've brought against Sony... MGM is going to do a live-action version of TOM AND JERRY (!), although the characters will become human beings. They envision a tall, thin comedian and a short, fat comedian, both echoing the "body language" and behavioral attitude of the cat and mouse. Sounds strange to me... A new science fiction radio series is on around the country, ALIEN WORLDS, featuring name actors such as Hans Conried... Al Brodax, who did the animation for YELLOW SUBMARINE, will do CAPTAIN FANTASTIC based on the Elton John cover by designer Alan Aldridge, who will design the film... Monty Python's LIFE OF BRIAN has finished shooting. - Rona Blabbit

I once attended a drive-in theatre showing of TEXAS CHAINSAW MASSACRE where the projection booth was hit by lightning before the film began. Unfortunately, I got in free and wasn't entitled to a refund. I took it as a sign that someone didn't want me to see the film. For awhile, I was afraid the same thing was going on for SUPERMAN, THE MOVIE.

The week the film came out I had no money to see it, and there wasn't even enough change in petty cash; when I finally got money for Christmas, the worst snowstorm in the last twenty years coupled with two weeks of sub-zero weather to further complicate matters. I did manage to get to a theatre New Year's day -- the last time my car was still running, as it turns out -- and the "forces" at work managed to stunt my appreciation a bit even then. The moron projectionists turned the lamp off during the closing credits leaving the music play as they raised the flights. But enough self-pity. SUPERMAN, THE MOVIE has enough sunshine to light some pretty dark days.

Essentially, the feeling garnered through viewing SUPERMAN is because of the film's idealism. After Christopher Reeve's super stunts you get the feeling that no matter how evil the particular person he has just apprehended, this alien believes in the inherent goodness of humanity. This not only makes the film unique in today's morass of depressing anti-heroic films, but even contrasts with today's comic books, each of which seems intent on telling us how grim life can be. In the view of most of those stories' authors, then, this film is set in some romantic never-never land, a world in which the good can (and do) win. I would say, though, that the film's tone, besides being refreshing and wonderful, is just as valid as its antithesis. We see no explicit deaths (unlike STAR WARS, for example, which wallows in them) despite the destruction of an entire planet, an earthquake, and a policeman shoved in front of a train. This isn't a disaster film, and the film isn't a disaster.

Richard Donner, Mario Puzo, David Newman, Leslie Newman and Robert Benton are the ones responsible for seeing that Superman is acceptable as something other than a costumed clown, and they succeed. Never is his appearance ridiculed, never do legal or moral objections to his crime-fighting and free lance life-saving crop up. Importantly, never are we made to feel that this story is "only a comic book character," unlike a lot of the previous comic book adaptations. Sure, $40 million was spent on the two films, but the treatment was far more important than the amount spent on flying scenes, and whatever contributed to the muting of what we had heard were Mario Puzo's original (rather crass) intentions is the reason. I think this is a film that may well cause other producers to reconsider their own approach to this medium's characters.

For those of you who haven't yet seen the film and don't wish to have plot details or the film's ending revealed, please skip the rest of this review and see the film first. I think you'll find it well worth the $3.50 (or more) you'll have to pay.

We'll get to the departures from the comic book out of the way first, since I've made such a big thing out of them in the past. Krypton in the film is quite different from the Krypton portrayed by Wayne Boring or Curt Swan, for example. What is supposed to contain flame forests, scarlet jungles and jeweled mountains looks far more like a planet of rock or ice in which the civilization is housed underground. Indeed, when the teen-aged Kal-El (pronounced "Kah-lel" by Marlon Brando's Jor-El) instinctively leaves home, he heads for the Arctic, which has a landscape reminiscent of Krypton's. The diagonal gem motif of the architecture is also quite different from DC's version, which is based more on '30s skyscrapers, and succeeds in looking like it actually IS alien architecture, something rarely accomplished in films. (STAR WARS and BATTLESTAR GALACTICA both look as if earthmen designed them). The rocket ship that sends Kal-

El to Earth is similarly unique, looking less like a modified Graf Zeppelin than a modernistic Christmas tree ornament. Krypton's clothing is similarly barren and colorless, with hues limited to those closest to grey and off white. And the film institutes the idea that the famous "S" symbol was simply the El family crest. Elder Harry Andrews' crest resembled a gallows; apparently the El family was coincidentally the only one to have an English alphabet letter as their symbol. And, due to casting, Jor-El and Lara's hair color changes from the comics' black to Marlon Brando's white and Susannah York's blonde.

Superboy doesn't exist in this version, hearkening back to the pre-1946 comics. Consequently, Clark Kent doesn't don his glasses until taking his job at the Daily Planet -- which occurs twelve years (!) after graduating from Smallville High. In the comics, both Kents die from a rare Carribean disease contracted in the revised version of their deaths in the '60s; but even back in the original accounts of their deaths, Martha was the one that died first. In the film, Jonathan has a bad heart in his first scene, and, as foreshadowed, dies of a heart attack. Martha not only doesn't beat him to the grave, she is apparently still alive, as Clark sends half of his weekly salary to a "little silver-haired old lady." The capsule that brought Clark to earth does not contribute his belt and his unmeltable glasses, just his baby blankets, which, although red, yellow and blue, are not explicitly shown to have been made into his invulnerable costume. The capsule does contain, however, an emerald gemrod which manages to build Superman's crystalline Fortress of Solitude out of thin Arctic air. In the comics, of course, Superman scouts out and creates his Fortress out of mountain, creating a giant key which passes as an airplane marker.

Jimmy Olsen is a photographer in the film (which usually doesn't lead to a reporting job), Lois Lane smokes (or tried to), and Lex Luthor's motivation is no longer tied to his baldness and blaming Superboy for it, since the latter deasn't exist. And Clark Kent manages to wangle the city beat on the Daily Planet despite his lack of experience and no college degree (unless Jor-El bequeathed one on him post mortem during his twelve year Fortress education). Perhaps, as Perry White says, it was because of his lightning speed on the typewriter.

All of these alterations to a legend I've held to be the true one since I began reading SUPERMAN back in 1959 do not, surprisingly, bother me enough to resent them. It might be that I've known about them long enough to assimilate them, but they're all facts that won't bother the uninformed filmgoer and I'll accept them, just as long as they don't cause DC to capitulate to the movie's "facts." No reviewers I've read so far have mentioned any of them. They do, however, bring up some other areas of criticism that I believe bear repeating.

The major criticism (or point of praise according to NEWSWEEK) is that the film seems divided into thirds, each of which has its own tone and actors (or "three movies for the price of one"). I found the balance between solemnity (due to impending doom, not a good time for humor), action and humor, despite others' views, quite effective. Hell, I cried a few times. Maybe it was just because I knew what was coming, but it was really effecting when the baby was being launched, when Clark told his foster mother that he had to leave, when Superman found Lois dead. Ned Beatty's bumbling Otis and Gene Hackman's jovial megalomania provoked images of BATMAN villains for many critics; I thought they were nicely done humorous counterpoint to the moments of tragedy in the film. Indeed, there's a great amount of comedy, none of it (save, perhaps, for an obligatory nod to the misconception that Superman changes clothes in a phone booth) condescending. VARIETY likened the film to a JAMES BOND outing, which is close -- but this film is far warmer.

The other criticism seems to be a backlash against the publicized cost of the film. First, the $40 million or more mentioned was for two movies, wasn't it? Second, what difference will the cost make to the average uninformed customer's enjoyment of the movie? Some seem to feel that if a $40 million film doesn't show every penny, it's a failure. Even if it doesn't show its cost, it still looks VERY impressive.

The flying scenes aren't that far advanced beyond George Reeves' matte shots, although being suspended from a crane does look better than lying on a board with your arms and legs out -- and they certainly serve their purpose. Obviously, STAR WARS technology can't be as easily applied to a human being as it can to a ship model. But he usually looks like he's flying, and after awhile you don't even think about it. But scenes in which Lois falls from Superman's grasp on their first flight (people who have congenital fear of falling from airplanes should love that one), Superman standing perpindicular on the side of a building (causing a cat burglar to lose his grasp and plummet to the ground) and other flying stunts worked quite adequately. I may not be totally convinced a man can fly, but I wasn't shown he can't.

Other special effects worked with varying degrees of success: Krypton's destruction, with Kryptonians falling into the seemingly bottomless caverns being created by the destructive nuclear reaction, was reminiscent of the Irwin Allen disaster scenes and the old eruptions of Vesuvius and the last days of Pompeii. The rocket ship traversing space and entering Earth's atmosphere were okay. The dam burst, except for Superman's pushing what looked like pebbles into the river bed to stop it, was believable. Mending the Earth's crust was fine too. Only a small amount of time was given to Superman's vision powers, and then only his X-ray, so we didn't get to see heat vision, telescopic, etc. All in all, though certainly not flawless, the special effects worked as well as they needed to.

There are two gaps of logic that should be pointed out. First, there's a lot of confusion with time. Beginning with the child opening the 1938 comic book at the outset, and judging from the few objects seen in the opening Smallville scenes, the obvious implication is that Superbaby has landed in 1938. Or earlier. Then, when Clark is shown on the football field in front of a row of mid-fifties automobiles (and with strains of Bill Haley's ROCK AROUND THE CLOCK over a car radio), we're supposed to get the idea that Clark is a contemporary of Richie Cunningham. However, when Superman returns from his (stated) twelve year sabbatical in the Arctic, it is clearly the present (judging from cars, the magazine rack, etc.). Then, despite our hearing him tell Lois that he is "over 21," Lex Luthor mysteriously observes these facts from Lois' interview: His rocket was launched in 1948, it landed here in 1951, and Kryptonite meteors must be easily attainable because of this. These dates work only with the idea that Superman is 30, having graduated from high school at 18 twelve years previous. Still, this would mean Superman was in high school in the '60s -- The Beatles and not Bill Haley. All this wouldn't be so jarring of we didn't have two additional contradictions: Jor-El mentions that "by the time you hear this, I will have been dead for thousands of your years," which would be possible if the ship was traveling at close enough to the speed of light to retard the baby's age to whatever it was when he landed, but which would make the arrival of Kryptonite on Earth quite improbable, being neither propelled or guided toward Earth. Notwithstanding that

atement, part of the baby's education
ard on his trip through the stars con-
ins mention of both Albert Einstein
d his famous theory. Since this oc-
red in 1905, Jor-El was either pre-
ognizant, viewed Earth in some way
at would avoid the evident problem
th light waves traversing the dis-
nce between the two planets in a
ort enough time, or Krypton coinci-
ntally had a resident named Einstein
o also discovered the theory of rela-
vity. Or maybe OUR Albert was
Kryptonian as well.

The other error of logic is more
ucial. We all know the dictum ap-
ied to all the DC SUPERMAN adven-
res since year one: no matter how
rd or intricately he may try, Superman
nnot change history or fate. He has
ed and proven this frequently, and
no longer even tries. In addition,
arvel's Mark Gruenwald (in his fan
ys) promoted the theory that if his-
ry -- or "fate" -- is disrupted, a
rallel world is created, which is the
ason for Earth I, II, III, et al. be-
use all that has been done is to have
eated an alternate line of reality,
ing nothing at all to change his own
ality. Both of these theories are
cepted by comic book readers, and
d the climax of the film appeared
a comic book, there would be major
jections. Simply, Superman was
t at the scene when the earthquake
used by Luthor buried Lois Lane in
r car and she died. By circling the
obe in opposition to the Earth's ro-
tion, he turned time back to the mo-
ent before the falling boulders demol-
ed Lois' car. He is overcome with
ief that he has allowed yet another
rson he loves to die (going back to
r-El and Lara, then Jonathan Kent,
en Lois), and deliberately disobeys
r-El's direct instruction that he must
t alter history. Evidently, Jor-El
eked at Gruenwald's THEORY OF
ALITY IN COMIC BOOKS and knew
at he was just creating another line
existence. But even accepting what
was able to do at face value, there
still the problem: Why didn't Lois
e again? The only thing shown in
e film was that he turned back time.
did nothing to prevent the rocks
m continuing to fall on Lois' car;
just appears, pulls her from the car,
d almost kisses her as they're inter-
pted by a teed-off Jimmy. The fis-
e never opens up under her car, al-
ough everything up to that point oc-
red just as we saw it the first time
ce she mentioned it, and Superman
n leaves the two of them to fend for
mselves on the same site she had
t died. Moving the car, moving
boulders -- anything added to the
ne to explain it -- would have been
preciated. As it stands, it simply
kes no sense.

But ignore all that. Really, allow yourself to simply be impressed by the beauty with which Christopher Reeve, Margot Kidder and Marc McClure, as well as Jeff East and Glenn Ford, portray those characters we've known for so long. I thought I'd be hard-pressed to displace George Reeves, Noel Neill (whose scene with Kirk Alyn and the young Lois Lane appears in the film after all, though very briefly and without dialogue of any description), Jack Larson and John Hamilton in my mind as those characters, but it was easy. Reeve's Clark is so physically different from Superman (made clear in the scene in which he almost tells Lois his other identity) that it's easy to see why Lois doesn't recognize them as the same person. And Reeve's Clark is funny, actually much closer to the comic book Clark than George Reeves' portrayal (which was never really very mild-mannered at all, and certainly never the bumpkin Christopher's Clark lets himself become), as well as being likable since we know this man knows more than anybody else on Earth and guides his other persona where he wants it to go. Clark seems a bit uncertain as to when it's expedient to be Clark and when to let the facade down: He plays the clown after Lois slams the ladies' room door on him, yet jumps out of a window to change into his other guise, apparently in full view of building-tops full of people and pedestrians.

Margot Kidder screams a heck of a lot, and believably. (You'd scream too if you went through what she does.) Despite her seeming cynicism and earthiness, Superman seems to bring out the romantic side of Lois -- it's not the reporter's mind that selected "Superman" as the name of "a friend." Margot's delineation of each mood is perfectly understated. This isn't the pesky, catty Lois that shared page-space with the more adult and rational Lois back in the days of her own title (depending on the writer), nor is this the personality-lacking toned down version being peddled these days. She's the combination of overly mature career woman with a romantic streak begging to be awakened that I like to think I've envisioned Lois to be.

Jeff East's job as the young Clark makes me sorry the producers opted for a Superboy-less version. If they'd been smart, they'd have seen the possibilities: SUPERMAN movies, a SUPERBOY TV series. East might not have made such a bad adult Superman, either. Marc McClure didn't have the "golly gee" Jack Larson personality, but with his few scenes he managed to portray a Jimmy that jibes more easily with the less frivolous JIMMY OLSEN adventures; friendly, eager to help, and unfazeable. Hanging from the cracking wall of a bursting dam seems not to have fazed him as much as being stranded out in nowhereland after rescue. And Glenn Ford, as well as Phyllis Baxter, are touchingly warm as the Kents, easily showing why Clark turned out so well. Hackman, Beatty and Valerie Perrinne handled their roles with much humor and equal professionalism; the Kryptonian actors were all properly urgent without becoming melodramatic. Donner's direction should be singled out for its fearlessness about not allowing the special effects and the spectacle to drown the acting. Quite underplayed, considering the extremes that might have been reached. Similarly, the late Geoffrey Unsworth (to whom the film is dedicated) deserves credit for the cinematography; the film is beautifully lit, gorgeously photographed, and generally contributory to the romantic tone of the movie. John Barry's sets and John Williams' score also are excellent.

After seeing this film, a friend of mine said, "Now, if they could only make a SPIDER-MAN film this good." Hopefully, this movie will become a benchmark for further super-hero productions -- even if they don't have $40 million budgets.

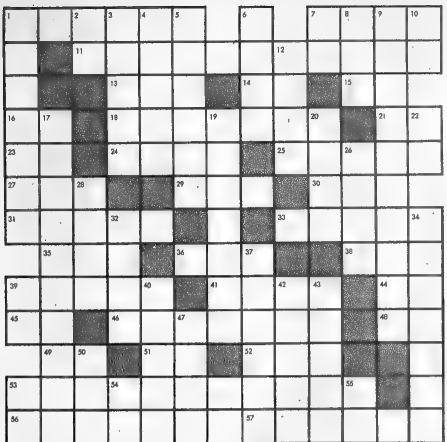
- Mike Tiefenbacher

[There are many scenes from which stills were released and which have been discussed that didn't make it to the final print. There are two optimistic facts that help in not bemoaning those omissions. First, there will be a part two, and there are likely to be flashbacks to the first film. Second, when the film is sold to television, there is every chance that each part will feature added footage. Patience is advised.]

TCRossword

ACROSS

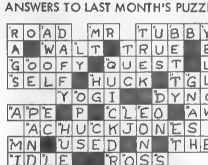
1. 50 year old spaceman to be played by Gil Gerard in upcoming movie
7. What George Reeves had to do off a stepladder to look like he was landing from a flight
11. Apparition Perry White likes to swear to
13. Pilot shown THE _____, ORIGINAL WONDER WOMAN
14. Husband of another Lois
15. Kidder in SUPERMAN, THE MOVIE: LA
16. SUPERMAN comic book writer circa '42-'50s: Horace Gold (init.)
18. Home town of The Atom
21. Fantastic Four method of air travel (initials)
23. Pioneer fanzine which recently



had its eleventh issue appear after ten years (abbr.)
24. Enclitic Egretal Eugenics Epigram (init.)
25. Why (German)
27. SUPERMAN artist of the '40s: Jack Bu___ey
29. Ribonucleic acid
30. Self-addressed envelope
31. Odin, Zeus, for example
33. 57 across' longtime artist for Dell Comics
35. First Hanna-Barbera cartoon (non-MGM) (initials)
36. Marc McClure in SUPERMAN
38. Estimated Time of Arrival
37. Father of Spock
41. Voice of Wimpy on newest POP-EYE series for Hanna-Barbera
44. CONAN strip artist (init.)
45. Longtime SUPERMAN artist; did daily BATMAN strip late '60s-'72
46. Eve Techsmacher in SUPERMAN
48. Lou Ferrigno: Hu___
49. POPEYE artist: Bela ___boly
51. Writer-artist of SUPERMAN VS. MUHAMMAD ALI (initials)
52. Green Lanterns' Guardians (abbr.)
53. Lynda Carter
56. Foster mother of Kara
57. Apeman that debuted in comics half a century back

DOWN
1. Director of SUPERMAN
2. Harry Osborne (initials)
3. Drew adaptation of BATTLESTAR GALACTICA pilot
4. Superman
5. Comic strip trouble shooter created by Roy Crane

ANSWERS TO LAST MONTH'S PUZZLE



6. Reflected sound
7. Superboy in SUPERMAN
8. Branch of service SUPERMAN's "Perry White" served in in his early '60s TV series
9. Most famous voice of Olive Oyl
10. SUPERMAN creator's art partner on '60s' Mighty Comics (init.)
12. ADVENTURES INTO WEIRD WORLDS (abbr.)
17. Terence Stamp in SUPERMAN
19. 100 square feet: Ten high by ___ (two words)
20. Comic's boss of Wonder Woman
22. Most famous voice of Popeye (init.)
26. Comic book in low supply
28. If yours truly said I was good at crosswords, I would be a ___
32. Krypton Elder: ___or Howard
34. SUPERMAN's Lex
37. Lois in the film
39. Comic that featured the adventures of Captain Comet (initials)
40. One across' arch-adversary
42. One across' arch-love
43. Creator of fifty-year-old sailor
47. Susannah York in the movie
50. Joe Palooka's wife
53. Story editor, later producer of SUPERMAN TV show; DC editor (init.)
54. A current SUPERMAN inker (init.)
55. New Zealand (abbr.)

Superman is, and has been, very important to me. Sooner or later, if you collect comic books, someone will ask you which title or character is your favorite. When that time came for me a lot of soul-searching went into my selection: Which comic series do I recall with the most good memories, the most fondness, and the (quite important) least amount of revulsion. When that question was put to me, Superman was going through startling metamorphoses, both in treatment and character, Murphy Anderson was inking Curt Swan's pencils, and a lot of my former favorite comics were either being destroyed by well-meaning replacements or were cancelled. So it was a simple matter to tell that person, "Superman." It was quite another to tell it to another comics fan.

Much disdain has been heaped upon Superman throughout the nearly twenty years of organized fandom, and even during the first Julius Schwartz years of the comic, you just never told anyone that you liked Superman. It's something like telling animation fans that you like LITTLE LULU cartoons, telling TV fans you like LAVERNE AND SHIRLEY, or rock fans that you like FLEETWOOD MAC. There's something in the fan psyche that says, "If it's too popular, it must be bad." I've seen this rationale extended to nearly everything in everyday life by people who probably weren't even conscious they were doing it. And, even though I try not to, I find myself often wondering whether my judgement of something is merely a snobbish rejection of a popular comic or person or whether I've fallen prey to that same prejudicial attitude. In the end, the attitude only serves as the means to lose the enjoyment that might have been experienced had the subject been approached with an open mind.

Those good memories of Superman were genuine, I'm sure. Undoubtedly, there were certainly abundant examples of kitsch contained with the Superman family of comics ("The Bride of Jungle Jimmy," "Superman does the Krypton Crawl"), but considering the bulk of Superman adventures published over the years, the percentage of entertain-

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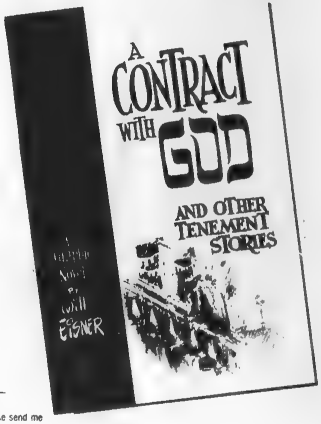

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ing stories was quite high. One of the first non-animated comics I ever read was SUPERMAN ANNUAL #1; the exact stories are dim in my mind, but I can well call up the emotional response to seeing the origin story, and especially the SUPERBOY adventure featuring Krypto. (SUPERBOY issues especially, dealing with parental love, adolescence, emotional crises and Krypto, were important to the creation of my own sense of dramatic emotional depth needed to make a three dimensional comic character. The disappearance of the type of story contained in the late fifties-early sixties issues of that comic as well as the continual attempts to update and "improve" the approach to the strip, have saddened me immensely. The comic seemed aimed at an audience just a bit younger than its hero; now it appears -- since the Legion swiped his book -- that Superboy is being done simply to provide another "Super" character for SUPERMAN FAMILY, with none of its original charm left intact.) These Mort Weisinger-edited issues are often criticized as maudlin, sappy or silly simply because they didn't choose to cater to the mid-teen audience Marvel Comics grabbed with SPIDER-MAN. Stan Lee's often repeated reasons for creating the latter character -- that Superman was a cardboard character with character and situation unrelated to real life who always seemed to have everything go his way -- are observations based on a casual acquaintance with the comics he was talking about, probably being too busy with his own work to even bother looking for those lackings. The prototype origin for the sympathetic super-hero, i.e., the death of the heroes closest loved ones, the agony over the loneliness of his dual identity, and the large cast of supporting characters, all were adopted successfully for Marvel's characters, adding that seemingly important "adult" ingredient, senseless violence and fistfights, to come up with the Marvel style. The chief difference then was undoubtedly the fact that, since he was appearing regularly in seven different books and being written by at least as many writers and drawn by five or six different artists, SUPERMAN couldn't afford to appear in continued stories; SPIDER-MAN could. It seems to me that when DC chose to abandon its three or two story format in favor of the Marvel continued story model, it sacrificed its identity to fight a losing battle with Marvel on their home ground. It seems significant to me that DC managed two million sellers and another almost to that point with the old format, and neither Marvel nor DC has even approached that since then with the more sophisticated comics.

Of course, with all of the writers involved with the canon, Superman and the supporting cast experienced a great range of treatment, ranging from horrendous to excellent. Lois Lane, for example, might act like a reasonable adult reporter in one story, then become a bitchy spoiled brat caricature of a woman in the next. Superman could go from callous to caring in his attitudes with her or toward criminals. Clark Kent would go from bumbling clown to reserved and good natured. Only Jimmy seemed to get constant characterization as loyal, though credulous, comedy relief. This disparity in characters is probably what offended most regular fan readers, and I understand it. But I don't let it spoil the character for me.

Why Superman? I doubt that it has anything to do with wish fulfillment; seeing him deflect bullets or crush metal are not part of the basic appeal of the character to me, just as they are not with The Hulk. Much has been made of the fact that it is impossible to sympathize with someone who can do anything -- notably by one of the Schwartz-Superman writers, Denny O'Neil (strangely, one of the first things he did when Schwartz inherited SUPERMAN was to rid the world of Kryptonite, effectively making him invulnerable even with the supposed "halving" of Superman's powers done at the same time). I find this criticism of the character beside the point. For me, Superman's physical actions never were the important part of the books he appeared in. In the best of circumstances, it was the interaction of the characters, the ingenuity of the plot, and the elicitation of emotion that drew me in; in other stories, it was simply the appearance of the character. I think these are two important, if non-intellectual reasons for liking Superman: He's a highly moral, rather ordinary emotionally, defender of a middle class ethic of "truth, justice and the American way" (traits that, before my inevitable cynicism of my mid-teens intervened, seemed quite important -- and which now actually conjure a setting of a comfortable never-never land that I enjoy believing might exist) and he is -- excepting some really unfortunate forays perpetrated by Gerry Conway -- an idealist that always remains true to his "code" against killing, for obedience of the law, and when properly portrayed, against the belief in the "hopeless plight of the human condition" that seems to plague nearly every one of today's heroes, notably his stablemate Batman; and he happens to have a very handsome costume. Very few other heroes' parents have been portrayed in their books; nearly none of them have dogs. I have parents; I have a dog. That may have had some-

thing to do with it. Again; these feelings were formed before the Kents were altered to unrecognizable facsimiles and Krypto was exiled to space.

About the time super-heroes were at their nadir, Mort Weisinger retired and his books were bequethed to four or five different editors. Naturally, this meant as many different approaches, and each of them seemed intent on changing the characters as much as possible. The "family" feeling was gone -- and, perhaps unwisely, the entire SUPERMAN persona was altered. The Daily Planet was all but jettisoned for WGBS and Galaxy Broadcasting; Jimmy and Lois were downplayed and Perry was shoved out of the picture for such characters as Steve Lombard, Morgan Edge and Lola Barnett. Although these changes were welcomed by fandom at the time, it must be questioned whether they weren't perhaps detrimental to the books' sales. After all, the "mild-mannered reporter for a great metropolitan newspaper" bit is still ingrained in the minds of those who aren't regular readers and if they pick up an issue and find the unfamiliar, who is to say how many readers put it back on the rack? It is interesting to note that the release of the film with its adherence to the surface details of the old comics has caused a bit of scrambling to restore some of the old order so those potential readers aren't turned away mad.

In any case, it was with great interest that I purchased and read two recent books written by comic book writers about the character I hold dear. THE GREAT SUPERMAN BOOK by Michael L. Fleisher ($8.95, Warner Books) and SUPERMAN, LAST SON OF KRYPTON by Elliot S. Maggin, ($2.25, Warner Books) each offer versions of Superman significantly different from the film version and it will be interesting to see whether either causes a larger number of fans to line up behind the current comic books.

THE GREAT SUPERMAN BOOK is volume three of Fleisher's Encyclopedia of Super-Heroes series, but for me, it differs in two respects from the previous two: it contains a lot more depth, and it's about a character I have enough interest in to read an encyclopedia about. BATMAN had far less "legend" in its stories, preferring instead to focus on mystery plots; WONDER WOMAN, until the few Julius Schwartz issues, bored me to tears, and since those issues, still does. For these reasons, perhaps my observation of depth is not valid -- but Fleisher managed to insert several pithy theories about the motivations of Superman, Lois and others -- including his entry into the "Who's the real person, Super-

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man or Clark Kent" debate. The reasons for the random actions and reactions of Superman's psyche are interestingly explained by Fleisher -- using psychological theory for Superman's apparent inability to have a relationship with a woman -- though I tend to dislike the degree of hopelessness attached to his conclusions. I think it's essential for the reader to feel that there is SOME hope of the Superman-Lois liason working, while my inference is that Fleisher believes it can never happen. (It would be interesting, now that the Earth II Superman's marriage has become part of the regular series, how Fleisher manages that occurance.)

There are problems. There are typos that should have caught; page 232's columns have been pasted up in the wrong order. The cursory reading of a few of the major entries caused me to go back and read a bunch of early issues I own but haven't read for lack of time; random investigation reveals that most characters who get an entry of their own despite being one-shots are criminals. Looking up to see who Lois Lane's roommate once was could only be successful if you read the entirety of the SUPERMAN entry which runs from page 312 to 451. And, understandably, Fleisher wished to make the book wieldy and ignored all of those stories that appeared in SUPERBOY, LOIS LANE, JIMMY OLSEN, ADVENTURE COMICS and MORE FUN, as well as the last thirteen years' worth of material. Considering that a lot of stuff has happened to Superman in that decade and a third, and many important facts were contained in those other five titles, you may find yourself becoming increasingly frustrated with the incomplete information. (Examples: I recall that Superman first became aware that Brainiac was a robot in a JIMMY OLSEN issue; first appearances of important characters like Lana Lang, Chief Parker and Krypto are not notated.) Still, it provides a lot of interesting facts to the fan that doesn't have the money to buy all the golden age (or even the now high-priced silver age) issues. From the dating of stories and changes, a clear picture of exactly who contributed the most to the picture of Superman we have to day -- and that is Mort Weisinger, who took responsibility for the series after Siegel and Shuster sued to take back their character in 1947. In the first four years of the character, in the name of justice presumably, Superman liked to toss criminals in the air to get confessions or informations, apparently killed a few of them and in one particularly odious issue, (ACTION #12, in which he declares war on traffic accidents) destroys property without regard to innocence (he demolishes traffic offenders'impounded cars, then goes to work on a used car lot, destroying them all and then sets in on a car manufacturing plant, leveling it). Although this early period may be likened to the early period of Mickey Mouse (i.e., pre-establishment) and admired by those who were around to experience those adventures first hand, I find them quite strange and totally inconsistent with my ideas for the character. Since those old annuals never had any dates on the reprints, I find it quite valuable to finally be able to know exactly how they fit into the chronology.

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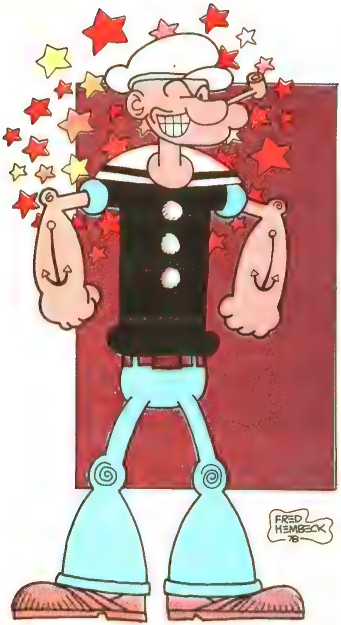
SUPERMAN, LAST SON OF KRYPTON, is, importantly, not an adaptation of the movie. Elliot Maggin's novel is original, and in some ways, is quite different from both the comic book and the film. Maggin rewrites the origin (again) this time revealing that Jor-El sent a probe out before Kal-El which sought out the Earth's most intelligent being (Albert Einstein!) to become the baby's foster parent; Einestein becomes the one who selected the Kents to be the ones by arranging the meeting of their truck and the rocket. As this fact will probably not be accepted into the comic book legend (unless custom at DC has changed), I doubt that it is of much value. I tend to view this change in the same way the "real" Flash origin (the one where the accident wasn't an accident) is viewed by everyone else -- it cheapens the original version rather than embellishing it, and let us please ignore it. (Although perhaps this is the reason Jor-El knows about Einstein in the movie...)

The plot of the book is complicated, having to do with Luthor, a stolen set of Einstein's secret papers and an alien trading post on the planet Oric, and it isn't made any clearer by Maggin's frequent tendency to change scenes in mid-chapter with no separation of paragraphs. The tone is science fiction, rather than drama, with more attention paid to details of scientific and physical nature than emotional and characteristic. In fact, most of the book belongs to Luthor (and Maggin's rewrites here of the Luthor legend are very acceptable, explaining clearly his motivations and outling definitely the fact that Luthor has NEVER killed anyone -- which explains how he can be pardoned so often) and therein lies the biggest flaw. Maggin's sense of slang is so bizarre (everything Luthor refers to -- and other characters as well speak this way -- is called a compound word made up of a piece of anatomy combined with an animal, vegetable or mineral) and his ability to write convincing dialogue so haphazard, that no emotional contact with any of the characters, least of all Superman, is ever accomplished. Jor-El, for example, manhandles Lara verbally in the best Marvel manner. Jimmy Olsen seems uncharacteristically (for me, at least) cynical and self-centered; Lois is her new acerbic and cold self. Only Steve Lombard and Morgan Edge speak as they do in the comics -- and they're both total jerks (so much for establishing rapport for characters).

Maggin's prose style is no less self-conscious than most of his comic



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book contemporaries, though it doesn't come anywhere near dropping into the pitfalls managed by Len Wein and Marv Wolfman in their MAYHEM IN MANHATTAN Spider-Man novel (which was so bedridden with descriptions straight from comic book captions and dialogue full of "Mister"s and other preliterate personal nouns to make one wonder if it had been edited at all). And the scope of the book seems as if it could be handled just as well as a comic book (and possibly better; describing aliens and alien architecture is somewhat less than precise as compared with seeing it) which seems a bit redundant. My idea of the great Superman novel has always been somewhat larger than what we're given, though Maggin's task -- recounting everybody's past for a new audience -- undoubtedly made that difficult. He did manage to get the Guardians, Chief Parker, Lana, Pete Ross, Jor-El, Lara, Ma and Pa Kent, Lois, Jimmy, Steve, Morgan and many others into it, and he told an entertaining tale, so I did not think it a waste of time.

However, next time, a bit more of Superman and his personal life and a bit less of the pretentions toward messiah would be appreciated.

And by the way, Superman can't give Luthor a cold by whizzing him through icy air. Pneumonia yes -- but colds are caused by viruses and not exposure to cold. You'd figure a guy that developed holograms in the fifties would be able to tell the difference.

– Mike Tiefenbacher

Remarkably, January, 1979 marks the completion of fifty years each in the comics for three of the four-color format's most famous heroes. In the opening month of 1929, spacemen and apemen first appeared in comics form and the world's most famous fictional sailor made his debut in a daily strip.

Lord John Greystoke was already world-famous from his appearances in hardcover, the pulps and on the silver screen when he entered the world of comics on January 7th, 1929 in THE

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ADVENTURES OF TARZAN by Harold Foster. Undoubtedly, a good part of the Jungle Lord's fame is due to the work of Foster, Burne Hogarth and the other creators of the strip. Although Rüss Manning's new work on the daily strip was replaced by reprints in 1974, the Sunday strip continues to supply new material.

That same 7th of January also saw the publication of the first daily strip of a hero who discovered he'd slept in a mine for five hundred years and found himself BUCK ROGERS IN THE TWENTY-FIFTH CENTURY. This was the first strip to take the comics beyond the ends of the earth and into space, utilizing many super-scientific apparatus that eventually brought the phrase, "Something out of BUCK ROGERS" into general usage. The spaceman had appeared first in a couple of adventures in AMAZING STORIES, a pulp magazine, but it was Philip Nolan and Dick Calkins' comics version that turned the character into a smash hit. Although it has been thirteen years since the last new daily was published, a new version of the story will be seen on movie screens in May of this year, and it's not unreasonable to expect a comics version to follow.

The third hero marking fifty years in newspaper strips made no prior appearances in any other medium and is a bit younger. The January 17, 1929 installment of THIMBLE THEATRE featured the debut of a gruff, one-eyed, no-nonsense, illiterate and tattooed figure with hammy forearms and bell-bottomed legs who has managed to take over and keep his strip going to the present, which is certainly no

mean feat. POPEYE THE SAILOR, created and drawn by Elzie Segar and subsequent replacements, has become an immortal cartoon star as well, and like TARZAN, is currently represented on Saturday morning TV in new adventures.

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We would like to offer our congratulations to these three immortal characters on their comics' golden anniversaries. Each of them has a thick scrapbook of clippings of their appearances in the strips, comic books, films, television, radio, books and many licensed items, and you can be sure that they have all become part of American culture. As such, each will probably continue to be represented in at least one of the various entertainment media.

– Jerome Sinkovec

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Interview

PAUL LEVITZ

By RICHARD BURTON
Transcribed by Les Chester
Edited by Richard Burton abd Paul Levitz

We first met Paul Levitz when he was just a skinny kid putting out a budding newszine by the name of -- what was it? -- oh, yes, THE COMIC READER. He's still skinny, but today he is editor of many of DC's most important titles (including all those which feature Batman) and also serves as Editorial Coordiantor, seeing that everybody knows exactly what's going on throughout the company. I don't think it would be too pretentious to say that we owe him a lot, since he decided to allow us to continue TCR when he found his workload at DC growing too large for him back in '73. And, as Richard Burton found out when he conducted this interview with Paul last spring, he has pretty definite views on his role at DC. (This is part one of the interview; if things go as planned, part two will appear next month.)

RICHARD: Let's begin with your professional comics career and your first book for DC which I think was PHANTOM STRANGER.

PAUL: Well, mystery stories actually. The first series story I did was an Aquaman in the back of ADVENTURE; that was one of Mike Grell's first art jobs. Yes, I think PHANTOM STRANGER is probably the first 'assigned' book. Essentially, Arnold Drake had been butchering the book and David Michelinie took it over for two issues and then I think he gave it up for SWAMP THING. So that was really my first crack at anything, and then about an hour later, practically, I ended up doing AQUAMAN and STALKER -- I wrote my first scripts for each back to back. And I was with these books for about six to eight months till PHANTOM STRANGER was cancelled and STALKER was cancelled. Then I went through a period when I just plotted AQUAMAN and other writers were doing the final scripts. And then I went back finally to do the last issue of it and then shifted over to the Justice Society and the Legion, which has really been my whole last two years.

RICHARD: You came to DC under the apprenticeship program.

PAUL: No, I was the last assistant editor hired under the old way of doing things. For many years, I guess from the time Carmine Infantino came in, the editors had the discretion to hire their own assistants. Around the time that DC was doing 25¢ books with 48 pages that first time, Murray Boltinoff had approched me about becoming his assistant, but before we were able to work anything out on that the 48-pagers ceased to exist. I guess about a year later I started writing texts for Joe Orlando when Marv Wolfman went from Warren to Marvel and could no longer do them for Joe. That had been a hangover from when Marv was Joe's assistant, and then I was hired by Joe to "fill-in" for Mike Fleischer while Mike took a summer vacation, and that turned into a permanent apprenticeship. I was the last assistant editor the company hired under that whole system where you're working per diem for an editor directly. Bob Rozakis, Jack Harris, Guy Lillian and Marty Pasko all came in through the Junior Bullpen program and through Sol Harrison. Sol had encouraged me very much. I had done some text writing for him also before becoming a staff member, but I was directly hired by Joe.

RICHARD: Was this on the basis of your work with The COMIC READER?

PAUL: I give that credit for it, that's

ere Joe and I knew each other from. dn't know Joe well when he hired , but he had read TCR. He gave the text assignment on the basis reading TCR. My presence in the, iness, and certainly where I've e in the business from that time, ased largely on it because as of ult of THE COMIC READER. As you course well understand, Richard, R developed a consciousness in me rying to be aware of the business an entire situation. Before I started ng TCR I'd never read a mystery ic, a war comic or a romance ic, I was not aware of 90% of the ple in the business but it brought into contact with all those things I was able to move. I had never an a fan of mystery or war comics, that's mostly what I edit today and my own choice. I think I do a bet- job on them than on super-hero ks.

CHARD: Any reason for that? Is the fact that there is a quality which like to keep going?

UL: No. I think the nature of the tor's role in comics today is such t an editor can make his greatest tribution on those books. The wri- comes so close to being his own tor if he's a good writer now, and so much control given over to him cause of the continuity, that if 're editing BRAVE AND BOLD you guide a man like Bob Haney, but essential style for the book is his. er a year you may shape it and move a little bit in your direction but re's a limit to the things that you n do with it. Whereas the mystery d war books give you an opportunity bring in more people, to train new ent, and that's terrific experience.

CHARD: That is the basic introduction the industry for all new writers and ists, they're always started off with hort mystery or war story.

UL: It makes the most sense. If u can't write a six-pager, you cer- nly can't write a series. As I ex- ain to everyone who writes in saying, t I don't really care about those ks, I just want to write FLASH," ou send me a FLASH plot today based on what you read in the t issue; we're eight issues further , our ideas of where that book uld be in a whole other universe d you can't know that, you can't ow all the thinking behind it. The stery books are simpler propositions. hink the average writer in the busi- ss today is under-trained -- the se who are already working. It k me three years of writing comics d being part of the field, to start ting together stories I felt were professionally competent. And I don't think that's an unusual length of time.

RICHARD: Is it because you're so desperate for writers today, that if somebody shows even the slightest promise on a mystery story you'll rush them into a series?

PAUL: I think that was true at DC two years ago; I think it was true, maybe it still is true at Marvel, although I think it's changing there, too. We've gotten past that now, with the return of Gerry Conway and Len Wein, with some of the people whom we've been working with growing more. But the field as a whole has certainly had that problem. Again, it falls down to the same syndrome of there were just so many years where no one was trained that there was an enormous vacuum to be filled. I don't think that anybody should be writing series without six months to a year writing back-ups, writing mystery stories, writing short, self-contained stories. There are very few writers in the business today of the newest generation of writers, who know how to plot. Because they never had to do six and eight-pagers where you have a beginning, a middle and an end, they were immediately thrown into these continuity books with vast sagas that make very little sense.

RICHARD: Had it been your plan, while doing TCR, to try to get into the industry or was it just something that happened along?

PAUL: It occured to me while I was doing TCR that the industry would be a nice place to work my way through college. It still basically is that to me. The process is taking a lot longer than I ever counted on because since Carmine's leaving DC, of course, my role within the industry has changed so much and the proportion of time devoted to college and work has sort of been reversed. But I'm still going on with the education, and I still hope to be out of the business within a few years.

RICHARD: Are you surprised with how far you've gotten in the industry? You've come a very long way from your fan days.

PAUL: Given the number of years, without question. I always felt that I was a better editor than writer and was not terribly surprised at getting to be an editor in the course of my stay with comics. Although, given the conditions present at DC when I was hired, I didn't expect it with that pattern. The fact that I am a writer of some of the major books and am a relatively well-respected writer within the field shocks me tremendously, given that I never saw myself as a writer -- still don't. It's something I do principally for the extra money. I enjoy doing it, I think I do it competently, I've learned how, but it's a craft. I do it in the same way you learn how to build furniture. I don't think I'll ever add anything to the creative limits of the field as a writer. And I'm certainly consistently amazed at the degree to which I'm involved in the business of comics.

RICHARD: Could you explain your role as Editorial Co-ordinator at DC?

PAUL: Well, if comic books were a real publishing company and we used real titles, then Joe's title would be Editorial Director and mine would be Managing Editor. Because what he does is completely direct the editorial policy of the seven, or nine, or however many editors we have, the creative direction of the magazines. My job is managing to get them done.

RICHARD: You're the one that makes sure all the stuff is in on time?

PAUL: I'm the only person in the office who knows where every page is.

RICHARD: Of every book?

PAUL: Of every book, whether in the hands of writer, penciller, letterer, inker, or the production department. It's my job essentially to keep track at any given time of about six thousand pages, and to make sure that each of our hundred freelancers is always working, always working on the right assignment and that the books close on time.

RICHARD: Is your role unique in the comics industry? Marvel doesn't use the title of editorial co-ordinator -- who would be your equivalent over there?

PAUL: John Verpoorten did much of it while he was alive, though not all. Jim Shooter does much of it now. There is no exact analogue. Simply because at Marvel you have writer-editors with greater control, who can make assignments on their own book without the knowledge of the home office. And when you're working Marvel-style -- it's infinitely more difficult for us to keep the books that are written Marvel-style on schedule, compared to the ones that are written in full script.

RICHARD: What percentage of the DC line is done Marvel-style?

PAUL: Perhaps fifteen percent. Comparatively small, but inevitably the troubled books in a deadline sense. All the stuff I write, much of what Len and Gerry write, an occasional story by any number of our other people. But because of that, also, it's much more difficult to do at Marvel. I think Jim is trying to do what I do in a sense, but it's a harder situation to control. And, of course, they have that entirely separate magazine line.

RICHARD: How far behind you now is your fan life? Do you still look on it with pleasure or is it something that is sort of locked into your past?

PAUL: Oh no, I'm basically still a comic book fan in the sense that I read virtually everything that comes out of the business, thoroughly enjoy and follow titles regardless of what company they're from. And I'm still a fan of certain individuals' work. I just wish I had time to do more "fan writing." You can't go home again; my perspectives are nowhere near what they were at that time. I have an unusual perspective even for a professional, because of the degree to which I'm involved in the business end of comics. But I'm a fan of the medium, I don't think that will ever change. I'm a collector — that's all part of it. I miss The COMIC READER in its own way — yet I'm glad to be rid of it. (Laughs.)

RICHARD: Did you have to change a lot of your fan ideas when you joined DC? I mean, if any fan comes into the business do they come in with a fixed set of preconceptions that have to be changed?

PAUL: I think what happens is it's sort of a concentric circle system. The more you know about the industry the closer you get to it, the less you have to change as you get nearer to it. Because I had done TCR and had been exposed to that many of the professionals that closely, had spent that much time around the office, I had fewer misconceptions than, say, a Californian fan whose exposure is all from reading fanzines, and maybe from meeting one or two professionals at a San Diego con. But every day, even now, as I learn more about the business of comics, about how the printers work, perspectives change.

I spent an awful lot of time, as most fans do, railing against the printers. I don't share that perspective any more. I still think they do a lot of things wrong, but essentially the fault isn't with them. Every year they come to the companies and say, "Do you want us to do this right, or do you want us to do it cheaper? It's either going to cost you more or we're going to do it worse." And the companies say, "Do it worse, please." Because they have to. So you're consistantly being educated if you're alive, if you're intelligent, your perspective is constantly shifting. And there's so much information that there's no way a fan can see. No way for them to appreciate.

It's very nice to argue that Neal Adams should be drawing comic books, but it's not viable from Neal's point of view or from the comic book company's point of view. From Neal's point of view we can't afford to pay him what he needs and what he can make elsewhere. He's a very talented individual. He can go to work for an advertising agency, do a piece of commercial work, and earn $500 in a day. There's no way we can pay that for a comic book, not because he isn't necessarily five times better than a brand new artist who might otherwise do the book, but because the book will not SELL that many dollars better. And you have to, in the end, make your decisions based on that.

RICHARD: What would you say was the effect the fans have had on the industry in the last few years? Dramatic?

PAUL: Well, yes, in the sense that the industry is entirely composed of fans, or if not entirely, at least largely. There are very few tried and true "professionals" left. What you have is a generation of people who are old enough that they are fans of things we don't remember and we don't think of them as fans. So that's changed a lot of things. I think it's changed the level of commitment to the books. I don't think that's mattered much but it's a different behavior pattern. I think it's decreased the professionalism of the industry and contributed to its decline in that sense.

Fans will shift assignments more easily. They'll give up a book because the artist changes, if they're a writer. Now that doesn't directly affect their writing. I, as a writer, appreciate that I prefer to have my work done by a good artist. But you've had a situation where a book like JUSTICE LEAGUE has had sixty-three issues with the same writer, the same penciller, the same letterer, the same colorist, and I think only three different inkers. Because the people involved were thorough professionals. You couldn't dream of

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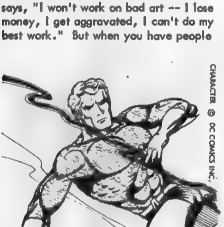
doing that today.

I don't think we've benifitted by people giving up books at the first frustration, which is a very common syndrome among fans-turned-professional, or because there's something "more fun" available on the horizon. Some inkers strictly pick their jobs on the basis of who pencilled them. And not on the basis that they are easier to ink so that they can make more money or whether it's better pencilling but... "Well, I did two Don Newton jobs last week, I feel more like doing a Kurt Schaffenberger job this week." An incredibly more valuble individual is the one who will do his best on whatever work the company needs. Within reason. I mean, I certainly am sympathetic to someone who comes in and says, "I won't work on bad art -- I lose money, I get aggrovated, I can't do my best work." But when you have people



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who are given a choice between two or three good assignments and just drift back and forth as they lose intrest... Kubert made a comment to me the other day; one of the young inkers had come over and asked him, "How do you stay interested in this stuff after thirty years?" And Joe essentially paraphrased the old J.P. Morgan reply about the man buying a yacht. If you've got to ask how much it costs, you shouldn't be here in the first place.

I have not given up books because of frustration with them. I've given up two titles in the course of my stay in comics that I've actually started on. AQUAMAN, because the Legion was available; it needed a writer and I was the most suitable choice available at the time, and I couldn't keep on AQUAMAN at the same time. And I've given up LEGION now because I am reducing my workload; I cannot produce this much stuff anymore. And I would rather give up LEGION than ALL-STAR because it has been my experience that I do my better work on ALL-STAR. But I don't jump back and forth between assignments, I try to maintain myself professionally. And there are some who jump around, regardless of age and regardless of whether they came from fandom or not. These people are completely unprofessional, and that's disappointing.

RICHARD: Regardless of the situation you've just outlined, how do you feel comic book writing is being handled today?

PAUL: I've expressed elsewhere one of my pet theories about the "Three Schools of Comic Book Writing" today: the Image School, the Impact School, and the Idea School. I think pretty much all of the writers fall into one of these three.

RICHARD: Can you give some examples?

PAUL: Cary Bates is the prime example of the "Idea Writer." He's interested in dazzling you with the ideas, the fancy footwork, the plotting intricacies, and not the characterization. Len Wein works for "Image." He wants you to have the sense you're sitting there, looking at something that is very real. And you have the depth of it, and you have the word image, and you have the visual image. And Roy Thomas is sitting there working for "Impact" and he wants, at the end of the book, for you to be just sitting on the edge of your chair. Completely different approaches to how they do comics. Each valid. Each commercial. Proven over the years. But no one's ever sat down and tried to get people like that to cross-discuss why they use that particular approach. What they've adapted from these influences, what they see as their unique contribution to the field.

There are one hundred fanzines that have done pieces on Don McGregor and what the industry has done to Don McGregor. But I have yet to read a piece that analyzes why Don McGregor is any different from any other writer in the business. He certainly is. The business feels that way, both in their response sales-wise to his books, and the fan response, the cult has formed around it. But no one is tempted to do any thinking, to say, "Yes, this is what Don does, and there are other people doing bits and pieces of it, and maybe this is what other writers could learn from Don McGregor." Or maybe this is what other writers could learn NOT to do from Don McGregor.

RICHARD: Which of your three categories would Don fit into?

PAUL: The three schools I mentioned are to my mind the schools that most of the working comic book writers, the commercial writers, are working in. Don is a case, I think, along with a few other writers, of people who are attempting to ignore the limitations and advantages of the medium they're working in. Don is not trying to write comics. He's trying to create a possibly new medium that synthesizes comics with something else, or maybe he just doesn't have a concept of comics that's shared by most of the people in the business. But it's not a school yet, because there's nothing in it that anyone else can hook onto.

You can say that Steve Englehart is derivative of Roy Thomas. Certainly Roy is derivative of Stan, but Stan is not an impact writer. Stan was unique unto himself, formed a whole starting point and people have branched off from him. He's a very seminal influence in that sense. Steve is descended from him through Roy. His approach to the stuff is much the same. He looks for the same sort of thing. You can't do that with Don, either in tracing his descent or in tracing anyone's descent from him. He may prove to be that eventually, but certainly for the moment all he is is an exception to the rule.

RICHARD: Which of these writing schools has influenced you the most?

PAUL: I think I'm most derivative of the Impact School.

RICHARD: The Roy Thomas school.

PAUL: My best work has been in that school and fashion.

RICHARD: ALL-STAR is very "Thomasish."

PAUL: It's purely modelled on Roy's AVENGERS of the sixties, stylistically. My favorite Marvel book was the AVENGERS of the sixties, to my mind principally the period between issues #40 and #60, where we had a group of characters who did not really appear in any other Marvel books. So you had to divise all the interplay and the continuity from that. My structural cues have all been from there.

I think I do things differently than Roy, not nearly as well -- he's a far, far better writer than I am. But I've developed a few quirks of my own that are part of my writing style, in the sense of story structure and the way I make use of continuity. Not continuity in the sense of "does this agree with previous issues," but weaving back and forth between issues.

I can't follow the Image School because I'm not a wordsmith at all. I

have a competent command of the English language but you'll rarely find a "turn of phrase" in one of my stories. It's not something I'm skilled at doing. It's not something I've had an inclination towards. I could probably do, to some degree, the more idea-oriented work like Cary. I've done some of that on LEGION, particularly when I took over the book from him and from Jim Shooter. At that point I was working in that mode, and was trying to keep within it as I slowly moved it towards more of a style I was comfortable with. But I'm most derivative of the Impact School.

RICHARD: Having discussed how you work let us get down to specifics and the two books that have garnered a lot of fandom approval -- ALL-STAR COMICS and SUPERBOY AND THE LEGION OF SUPER-HEROES. Starting first with ALL-STAR and the Justice Society. You say this is one of your favorite books -- perhaps the favorite of all you have done to date?

PAUL: I think probably my best writing has been on either ALL-STAR or AQUAMAN, it's rather a case of hair-splitting. AQUAMAN is the only case where I really pulled together with solid characterization. I regret not having done a few more issues of that book. At least I think I've done some of my single best stories on ALL-STAR, the origin story particularly.

RICHARD: The one that appeared in DC SPECIAL number 29?

PAUL: Right. I also like what I've done with Power Girl in terms of maturing her character, with establishing the Huntress and making use of the psychological concepts of what a second-generation super-hero would be... there's got to be some different thinking there. She's grown up from infancy with the concept of what a super-hero is.

RICHARD: The Huntress?

PAUL: Yes, and she's got a very different sort of character as a result. And the by-play between her and Power Girl in the issues to come is starting to be lovely. They're a natural combination.

RICHARD: In effect they are Superman and Batman.

PAUL: Purely.

RICHARD: Did you feel you couldn't use the original Superman and Batman any further, so you had to introduce these new characters to do something with them?

PAUL: No. The thing I love about ALL-STAR is, it's Earth-2 and nothing is impossible, and that it can be a real world. People are born, grow up, and die. As I'm sure by the time this interview sees print, everyone will be aware, Batman dies on Earth-2. As I established in the Huntress origin, Bruce Wayne had given up being the Batman, it being a little ridiculous for a sixty year old man to be doing that. Of course, there was a psychological reason, but in the end the reality was age. He is forced by circumstances to put on his costume again for the last time, and he dies.

RICHARD: You had said that you didn't want to bring Bruce Wayne back in costume into the JSA.

PAUL: I didn't, but he has to die in costume. Bruce Wayne shouldn't die. It would be an irrelevant death. I haven't scripted the issue at this time, but I have the epilogue protion sorted out in my mind. This shows the funeral with Robin -- Dick Grayson -- and the Huntress -- Helena Wayne. At that point Robin is the stronger of the two sort of pseudo siblings because he's older, maturer, and there's a slight difference between being a child who has seen his parents die and then being raised by someone else, and a natural child. Robin comforts the Huntress and says, "It's okay. Bruce is dead, but Batman will live on." And she says, "No." And his reaction is, "Huh?"

RICHARD: You mean he plans to take over as Batman?

PAUL: Yes, he's going to stop being Robin and be Batman now, but she says, "No." He, confusedly, and in a slightly chauvinistic fashion, scratches his head and says, "Huh? So you mean YOU want to be Batman?" And she says very calmly, "No. THERE was THE Batman. And that's it. You can be Robin and I can be the Huntress, and we can carry on Dad's work, but he was The Batman, and there can't be another one." And that's all she wrote. You have to accept that the beauty of the book is a world where you have that kind of progress, where you can accept the reality of the world and you don't have to have happy endings. You don't know everyone's going to walk away from it alive.

RICHARD: Have you been largely responsible for the increasing use of Earth-2 concepts at DC in recent months?

PAUL: No, I think that's more a case of the younger editors being more interested in it, more aware of it.

RICHARD: The fact that you can do more with it.

PAUL: Yeah. If I can claim any credit at all it's simply because ALL-STAR has been enjoyable, it's incited people to do that more.

RICHARD: How do you see Earth-2? I think I read somewhere it's supposed to be about forty years behind Earth-1.

PAUL: We've published several different explanations. The one I operate

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by is that it's 1978 on Earth-2. That World War Two happened, ended thirty-three years ago, that they are basically in the same situation we are. Certain particular EVENTS happened earlier there. Super-heroes as a phenomonen happened on Earth-2 in the late thirties or early forties for the first time, whereas they didn't happen on Earth-1 till the fifties perhaps. Quebec is a separate country. South Africa is ruled by its native inhabitants. The world's a little more civilized I think -- or at least, a little bit more re-designed to my specifications. (Laughs)

RICHARD: So you can play world-maker with it.

PAUL: Purely self-indulgence, I admit it, but harmless to the book. More important, people age at a relatively natural rate. Not necessarily year for year, but if you look at a character

like Wildcat, we never established really whether he had a career throughout WW2. We know he did start his career in the course of WW2, so my premise is that he started it in the very last months of the war. Now he is in his fifties. In you're in your fifties, and your only super-power is that you were once a prize-fighter, though you may still be in great condition, you're not going to be really able to do much, as opposed to a Flash or a Green Lantern who have super-powers which can persist.

RICHARD: On the same basis, is the Flash as fast as he was, or has age diminished his speed?

PAUL: I think not so much his speed as his stamina probably.

RICHARD: And Green Lantern; would he find it difficult to summon up the necessary will-power to operate his ring?

PAUL: I think not. To the best of my knowledge, will-power does not diminish with age, on necessity. It does in some individuals certainly, but there's no biological process. There are cases of people in their nineties whose minds are as clear and powerful as anyone in their twenties. Green Lantern has gone through some experiences in his life that have possibly made it a little more difficult for him to focus, but he's back from that now: His power is undiminished. And with Dr. Fate, of course, we've established the whole mystic basis that age does not take place naturally. He's been the host body for a spirit and that sort of gets reflected onto his wife also. But as you have this kind of growth you can use of that, you can get the development, the natural struggle between the young and the old -- VERY important to the book.

RICHARD: That comes over very strongly, I think. You never forget that the oldest members of the JSA are getting on in years.

PAUL: And that they have... not a resentment to the young people who are taking their place, but not a complete understanding of who they are, and certainly not an agreement about what the priorities of the world should be.

I've been spending some time developing Hawkman's confusion over the concept that the JSA that he remembers, when he was chairman, took care of its own first. Today's JSA doesn't. Doesn't have the same monolithic team spirit. They're more likely to prevent a disaster and THEN worry about whether one of their members survived. Yet they all fight very much together. They are a team. You don't have dissension, you have disagreement. It's not like the early situation in the Avengers with Captain America and Hawkeye. It is far closer to the Fantastic Four in that sense.

RICHARD: How has your version of the JSA been recieved by the 'purists,' the ones that remember and revere the Golden Age ALL-STAR COMICS?

PAUL: I guess the only two vocal ones left are Jerry Bails and Roy Thomas. Jerry enjoyed the origin story very much. He has disagreements with me about my treatment of them, but I know he enjoys the book nonetheless. I don't know about Roy's feelings on it. There are, I'm sure, other 'purists.' A certain part of me would like to see it again with thirty-four pages, and solo chapters, but it's not the way we do comics any more.

RICHARD: Why is the Earth-2 Robin seen so little in your stories? He was around quite a bit in the early Conway stories.

PAUL: I don't use Robin, I try not to use characters who are the closest doppelgangers. I think there's a marked difference in the Earth-2 Superman, but even so he is only seen on a rare occasion. Flash and Green Lantern are very different. Hawkman we have changed to give a different visual. And the core of the group -- from the point of view of the fun of writing about them -- are certainly the Huntress, Power Girl and Dr. Fate. Those are the three with the most realistic characters, to my imagination, and the ones with whom I have the most ability to work. Robin, the Golden Age Atom, the other parallel characters who don't have super-powers, became superfluous. There's nothing Robin can do that the Huntress can't.

RICHARD: What about characters like Sandman, Starman, Dr. Mid-Nite, etc.? They are unique to Earth-2.

PAUL: I did use Dr. Mid-Nite. I had inherited him from Gerry. I felt that the story in which Dr. Fate nearly died, where Dr. Mid-Nite confronted his inability to save life, was one that necessitated his being out of the book for awhile. Sandman, again, is not a 'powered' character. There's nothing particularly visually interesting about him either. Hourman, also, I used for a while.

RICHARD: Wasn't he the one who was totally baffled and confused at how the JSA had changed since he was an active member?

PAUL: Yeah. I used him as a vehicle for someone coming in who had no experience of the revised JSA at all; came on stage, couldn't cope. The rules are all different. This isn't how super-heroes behaved in his time. He might be back again at some point. But there's beginning to be a core to the group itself. It's beginning to tighten up a little bit. And the other characters are there, off stage. I will eventually try to do a story striaghtening out the whole Spectre mess. He's too good a character to have perpetually in limbo. There are so many ideas, so much stuff to play with.

RICHARD: You wrote an article in AMAZING WORLD OF DC COMICS #16 on how you see the characters of each of the JSAers. Did you have those characterizations worked out in advance, or is it how they've developed during your tenure on ALL-STAR?

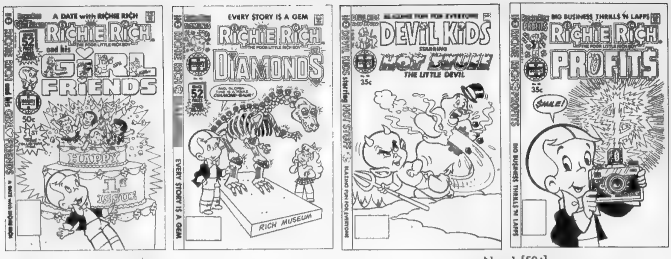
PAUL: Well, I had a fair idea before I started writing it, since I had been Gerry's assistant, and both of us had been fans of the ALL-STAR books when he first came in. ALL-STAR was brought back on my suggestion. When we brought Gerry over from Marvel I was in conference with Carmine and Joe Orlando, trying to devise a starting point for him in terms of a group of books. I proposed ALL-STAR, saying that we can viably sell it. Every year the JLA/JSA team-up are the best selling issues of JUSTICE LEAGUE, let's see if they can hold their own book. So I was very involved in the book from the very beginning. Of course, it's evolved as I've gone along. My views of the characters are a little different from Gerry's. My view of Dr. Fate is shaped very much by what Marty Pasko and Walt Simonson did in that issue of FIRST ISSUE SPECIAL. My views of the others are shaped by what Gerry did.

RICHARD: Power Girl and Huntress are your characters, that you've introduced...

PAUL: Power Girl was Gerry's.

RICHARD: ...oh yes, of course. But you've developed her character and launched her in her own mini-series in SHOWCASE. You said, I believe, that you did that not because she was particularly popular, but because you felt the potential was there to do it.. Have there been any results yet?

PAUL: The early sales look good. It would not surprise me if there was a Power Girl book in the foreseeable future, or certainly a series. I think there's a potential there because I think the field is ready for strong



women characters, not in the sense of physical strength, but character strength. They will truly be the protagonists of their books, as opposed to Lois Lane who was never the protagonist of her magazine. And Supergirl, who never held on to a lead feature for any length of time, and was derivative. Power Girl, in a sense, is as derivative as Supergirl -- but not in a thematic sense. Her powers, her origin, yes. The way the character behaves, the type of story which she's in are no way related. Likewise, the Huntress.

RICHARD: You've brought these two characters into the original membership of the JSA, do you want to introduce any more characters or do you feel the balance is now right between the young and old members?

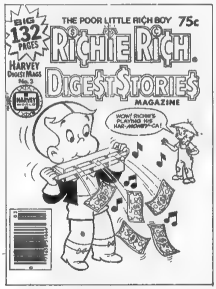
PAUL: I don't have any plans to introduce others. A year from now, if I'm still doing the book, who can tell? Again, you're always growing. I mean, I have just started working with the new editor of ALL-STAR, Ross Andru, I don't really know where he wants to go with the book. I don't imagine it will change things much since it's a successful book. But we play off each other's ideas.

RICHARD: What have you in mind for the future of the JSA -- have you a set plan?

PAUL: No. I have some loose threads in the death of Batman issue I have to resolve in the one thereafter. I want to do a casebook story set in the fifties explaining why the JSA disbanded and ceased operation for twelve years. The essential concept of which is that they were called before the House Un-American Activities Committee. A logical reason, given the time-frame. Bob Rozakis provided me with the topper for it, the actual climactic event, which is Senator McCarthy saying to them, essentially, "Well, if you're good Americans, show us your faces." Which I think would be enough to make them retire. So that will explain that, tie it up. I think it will be a fun story. That's all I've got cooking so far.

Harvey Coming Comics

Two more RICHIE RICH titles have been added to Harvey's canon: RICHIE RICH AND HIS GIRL FRIENDS and RICHIE RICH AND REGGIE, both of which came out in January. By our calculations, that brings it to somewhere near twenty-five different titles starring Richie and friends.



The Harvey Comics listings for last month arrived a day late to be included in that issue, but in the interests of completeness, we offer those comics released in January (or those dated April):

On sale January 4
HOT STUFF No. 148
RICHIE RICH BILLIONS No. 29 [50¢]
RICHIE RICH FORTUNES No. 45
On sale January 11
CASPER, THE FRIENDLY GHOST No. 203
RICHIE RICH JACKPOTS No. 40
RICHIE RICH MILLIONS No. 94 [50¢]
On sale January 18
RICHIE RICH AND HIS GIRL FRIENDS No. 1 [50¢]
RICHIE RICH RICHES No. 41
SAD SACK AND THE SARGE No. 136
On sale January 25
RICHIE RICH No. 177
RICHIE RICH AND DOLLAR THE DOG No. 7 [50¢]
RICHIE RICH ZILLIONZ No. 15 [50¢]
On sale February 1
RICHIE RICH AND JACKIE JOKERS No. 31
RICHIE RICH AND REGGIE No. 1 [50¢]
RICHIE RICH PROFITS No. 28

February releases
DEVIL KIDS No. 93, May. [2/8]

RICHIE RICH DIAMONDS No. 42, May. 50¢. [2/8]

RICHIE RICH DIGEST STORIES No. 3, May. 75¢. [2/8]

RICHIE RICH AND GLORIA No. 8, May. [2/15] 50¢.

RICHIE RICH BANK BOOKS No. 40, May. [2/15]

RICHIE RICH SUCCESS No. 87, May. 50¢. [2/15]

SAD SACK No. 268, May. [2/15]

RICHIE RICH AND CADBURY, THE PERFECT BUTLER No. 7, May. 50¢. [2/22]

RICHIE RICH AND CASPER No. 28, May. [2/22]

RICHIE RICH DOLLARS AND CENTS No. 91, May. 50¢. [2/22]

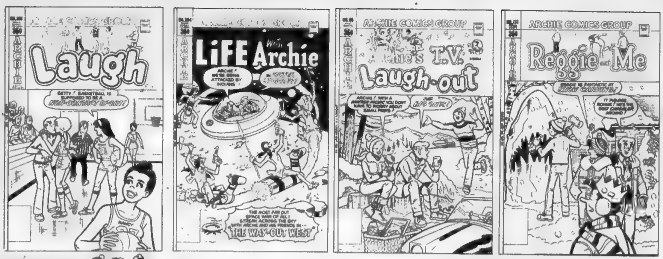
RICHIE RICH VAULTS OF MYSTERY No. 28, May. [2/22]

RICHIE RICH No. 178, May. [3/1]

RICHIE RICH CASH No. 29, May. [3/1]

RICHIE RICH GOLD AND SILVER No. 24, May. 50¢. [3/1]

RICHIE RICH INVENTIONS No. 8, May. 50¢. [3/1]



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Archie Coming Comics

Archie Comics has raised their cover price to 40¢ with this month's issues.

ARCHIE AND ME No. 109, April. [1/23]

ARCHIE'S JOKEBOOK No. 255, April. [1/23]

BETTY AND VERONICA No. 280, April. [1/23]

JUGHEAD'S JOKES No. 63, April. [1/23]

PEP No. 348, April. [1/23]

ARCHIE No. 279, April. [1/30]

JUGHEAD No. 287, April. [1/30]

LAUGH No. 337, April. [1/30]

LIFE WITH ARCHIE No. 204, April. [1/30]

ARCHIE'S TV LAUGH-OUT No. 66, April. [2/6]

BETTY AND ME No. 101, April. [2/6]

LITTLE ARCHIE No. 141, April. [2/6]

REGGIE AND ME No. 113, April. [2/6]

ARCHIE COMICS DIGEST No. 35, April. If things go as they have been, there's a better than even chance that a super-hero reprint will appear in this issue. [2/13]

ARCHIE ANNUAL DIGEST No. 34, April. Another super-hero story should appear here. Y'know, it's really amazing that only in comics is it possible for an annual series to begin in 1949 and be up to #34... [2/20]

LITTLE ARCHIE ANNUAL DIGEST No. 4, April. [2/13]

EVERYTHING'S ARCHIE No. 73, April. [2/20]

Warren News

Warren will release an all-ROOK SPECIAL, apparently numbered #1, in March.

Another of Warren's photo-magazine specials will appear in March: LORD OF THE RINGS, based on the Ralph Bakshi cartoon.

Archie Goodwin has returned to writing some stories for Warren and so far has lined up as artists on them: Al Williamson, Alex Toth and Russ Heath.

Coming Comics

VAMPIRELLA No. 77, April. Making up this issue are "Shadow Of The Dragon" by Bill DuBay and Gonzalo Mayo featuring Vampi, "Night Of The Yeti" by Mike Fleisher and Russ Heath; "The Night The Birds Fell" by Nick Cuti and Pepe Moreno Casaures; "Futura House Is Not A Home" by Cuti and Isidro Mones; and "Siren On The Seekpnk" by J. Thomas and Auraleon. The cover is another photo of Barbara Leigh as Vampirella. [2/6]

EERIE No. 100, April. Featured: A chapter of ROOK by Bill DuBay, Jim James and Alfredo Alcala; "Gotterdämmerung" by Budd Lewis and Isidro Mones; "Horizon Seekers" by Leo Duranona and Cary Bates; " Darklon Duel" by Jim Starlin; and "Three Flames Of The Phoenix" by Lewis and Pepe Moreno Casaures. The cover is either by Penalva or Richard Corben. [2/13]

Gold Key Coming Comics

BEEP BEEP, THE ROAD RUNNER No. 78, April. New material. [2/1]

BUGS BUNNY No. 207, April. New material. [2/1]

Walt Disney DONALD DUCK No. 206, April. All reprints. [2/1]

Walt Disney HUEY, DEWEY AND LOUIE No. 55, April. New stories. [2/1]

Walt Disney MICKEY MOUSE No. 194, April. All reprints. [2/1]

THE PINK PANTHER No. 63, April. New stories by, if things haven't changed recently, Warren Tufts. [2/1]

UNCLE SCROOGE No. 163, April. Carl Barks reprints. [2/1]

YOSEMITE SAM No. 59, April. New stories. [2/1]

Walt Disney BEAGLE BOYS VS. UNCLE SCROOGE No. 2, April. New stories. [2/8]

DAFFY DUCK No. 121,April. New stuff. [2/8]

LOONEY TUNES No. 25, April. New stories. [2/8]

TOM AND JERRY No. 317, April. Reprints from the '50s. [2/8]

TWEETY AND SYLVESTER No. 92, April. New stories. [2/8]

WALT DISNEY'S COMICS AND STORIES No. 463, April. 13 pages are new material, 11 are reprint. [2/8]

BEETLE BAILEY No. 126, April. New stories. [2/22]

BULLWINKLE No. 20, April., Reprints of Rocket J. Squirrel, Bullwinkle Moose and cronies return. [2/22]

POPEYE THE SAILOR No. 145, April. Following his 50th anniversary, a reprint appears. [2/22]

SUPER GOOF No. 52, April. New stories. [2/22]

THE TWILIGHT ZONE No. 90, April. The penultimate issue is all new. [2/22]

UFO AND OUTER SPACE No. 20, April. New stories. [2/22]

WINNIE THE POOH No. 12, April. New stuff, with no ads. [2/22]

TCR Message

[continued from page 8]

sampling of our readership to work with, so please vote if you haven't already.

Thanks for the many kind words about the new format and it looks as if it will be as successful as we could have hoped. If we have tried your patience, we apologize and encourage you to stick with us as subscribers. You won't be sorry.

– Mike Tiefenbacher

Marvel Coming Comics

DAREDEVIL No. 158, May. "A Grave Mistake" is by Roger McKenzie, Frank Miller and Klaus Janson. The secret of Deathstalker is revealed -- as DAREDEVIL continues its reign as the comic with the largest supporting cast of female characters. Miller and Joe Rubinstein did the cover. [1/30]

MARVEL SUPER-HEROES No. 80, May. One of the two remaining regular reprint books continues with "And In This Corner... The Avengers" by Roy Thomas and Herb Trimpe from THE INCREDIBLE HULK #128. The original cover was by Trimpe. [1/30]

MARVEL TREASURY EDITION No. 20, May. The first treasury of the month features reprints from THE INCREDIBLE HULK, but we don't have specifics. [1/30]

MARVEL TREASURY EDITION No. 21, May. The second issue also is light on anything specific except that it features FANTASTIC FOUR reprints. [1/30]

MARVEL TWO-IN-ONE No. 51, May. "Full House, Dragons High" is by Peter Gillis, Frank Miller and Bob McLeod. The Thing, The Beast, Ms. Marvel, Wonder Man and Nick Fury try to take a night off for a poker session -- but life being what it is, the inevitable must occur. George Perez and Joe Sinnott did the cover. [1/30]

THE SAVAGE SWORD OF CONAN No. 39, April. The issue's lead story featuring Conan is "Legion Of The Dead," which is a story of Conan's youth by Roy Thomas and John Buscema. Solomon Kane is also featured in the conclusion of "Moon Of Skulls." [1/30]

SHOGUN WARRIORS No. 4, May. "The Mech Monster" is by Doug Moench,

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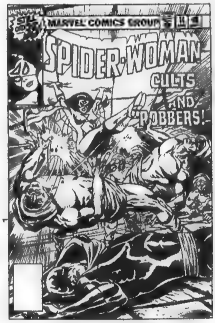

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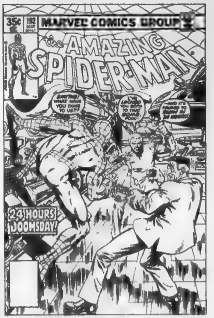
Herb Trimpe and Dan Green. The forces of evil begin to squabble amongst themselves and return to fight the good guys alone. Trimpe did the cover. [1/30]

SPIDER-WOMAN No. 14, May. "Cults And Robbers" is by Mark Gruenwald, Carmine Infantino and Al Gordon. Spider-Woman tracks down the cult that is threatening her civilian



job... or does she? Bill Sienkiewicz and Tom Palmer did the cover. [1/30]

THE AMAZING SPIDER-MAN No. 192, May. "24 Hours To Doomsday" is by Marv Wolfman, Keith Pollard and Jim Mooney. Spidey and Jonah are shackled together with a time bomb while The Fly attacks. And guess who dies. Pollard and Bob McLeod did the cover. [2/6]

BATTLESTAR GALACTICA No. 3, May. "The Lost Gods Of Kobol" is by Roger McKenzie, Walt Simonson and Klaus Janson. This issue should finish off the adaptation of the pilot film, and as such, we believe we may have the story title and credits for the next issue by mistake. In any case, they'll be right for one issue or the next. Simonson and Janson did the cover. [2/6]

CAPTAIN AMERICA No. 233, May. "Crossfire" is by Roger McKenzie, Sal Buscema and Don Perlin. Cap is trapped twixt the hordes of Morgan's underworld thugs and the National Force. Sharon

Carter's there too -- with the charge to kill a close former friend. Keith Pollard and Al Milgrom did the cover. [2/6]

CRAZY No. 49, May. This is another "special issue." [2/6]

MARVEL PREVIEW No. 17, May. "Blackmark" by Gil Kane (with scripting help, we believe, from Archie Goodwin) is presented. It's the never before seen second book from the Ace Book BLACKMARK series. Kane probably did the cover. [2/6]

THE MICRONAUTS No. 5, May. "The Prometheus Pit" is by Bill Mantlo, Mike Golden and Joe Rubinstein. More is revealed about Philip Prometheus, the mad cyborg, whilst Bug takes on the forces of H.E.L.L. single-handedly. Golden and Rubinstein also did the cover. [2/6]

RED SONJA No. 15, May. Other than knowing that Roy Thomas and Sal Buscema did the issue, and that it's the last, we know nothing about it. [2/6]

THOR No. 283, May. "At Last -- The Celestials" is by Roy Thomas, John Buscema and Chic Stone. Thor meets Gammemnon the Gatherer outside Peru -- and is soundly trounced. Buscema did the cover as well. [2/6]

THE AVENGERS No. 183, May. "The Redoubtable Return Of Crusher Kreel" is by David Michelinie, John Byrne and Klaus Janson. Ms. Marvel is formally initiated into the Avengers' coterie, Wanda and Pietro take their leave to sort out their heritage, and Hawkeye chances to cross paths with The Absorbing Man, who soon takes on the whole bunch of 'em. George Perez and Terry Austin did the cover. [2/13]

THE BLACK PANTHER No. 15, May.

"Revenge Of The Black Panther" is by Ed Hannigan, Jerry Bingham and Gene Day. Alongside the ubiquitous Avengers, the Panther faces the full, unfettered fury (it says here) of Klaw, Master of Sound. This is the last issue, but the Black Panther will return in MARVEL PREMIERE, somewhere around #49. John Buscema and Al Milgrom did the cover. [2/13]

CONAN THE BARBARIAN No. 98, May. "Sea Woman" is by Roy Thomas, John Buscema and Ernie Chan. Conan encounters a mermaid and Belit gets jealous. Buscema and Bob McLeod did the cover. [2/13]

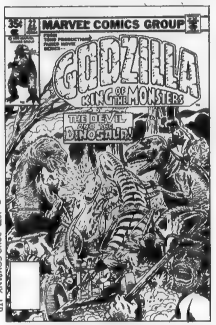
GODZILLA No. 22, May. "The Devil And The Dinosaur" is by Doug Moench, Herb Trimpe and Jack Abel. Godzilla and Devil Dinosaur defend Hidden Valley side by side. Trimpe did the cover. [2/13]

THE HULK Magazine No. 14, May.

"A Cure For Chaos" is by Doug Moench, Ron Wilson and Rudy Nebres. The Hulk's TV-inspired adventures continue. Also, Moon Knight is featured in "Countdown To Dark" by Moench, Bill Sienkiewicz and Bob McLeod. Bob Larkin painted the cover. [2/13]

THE INCREDIBLE HULK No. 235, May. "The Monster And The Machine" is by Roger Stern, Sal Buscema and Mike Esposito. Part one of The Hulk's encounter with Machine Man, which will lead up to the revival of the latter's book, features our emerald buddy beating the cogs out of the robot. Al Milgrom and Steve Ditko did the cover. [2/13]

THE INVADERS No. 40, May. "V Is For Vampire" is by Don Glut, Alan Kupperberg and Chic Stone. Baron Blood returns from the dead and signs on with Lady Lotus and her crew. This is the last regular issue. Kupperberg



and Joe Sinnott did the cover. [2/13]

MARVEL TALES No. 103, May. The other reprint book left on the schedule continues with "The Kangaroo Bounces Back" by Gerry Conway, Ross Andru and Jim Mooney. It's from AMAZING SPIDER-MAN No. 126. Romita did the original cover. [2/13]

NOVA No. 25, May. "Invasion Of The Body Changer" is by Marv Wolfman, Carmine Infantino and Klaus Janson. Nova, the Shinx and his crew battle a bunch of Skrulls as the origin story continues to unfold. It'll unfold in FANTASTIC FOUR from here on, though, as this is this book's final issue. Keith Pollard and Rudy Nebres did the cover. [2/13]

RAWHIDE KID No. 151, May. Marvel's longest running ranny heads for his last round-up, as the only western that has run uninterrupted since 1963 has its final issue. [2/13]

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PIZZAZZ No. 18, March. [2/13]

X-MEN No. 121, May. "Shootout At The Stampede" is by Chris Claremont, John Byrne and Terry Austin. The X-Men battle Alpha Flight at the Calgary Stampede Grounds, as Canada's first super-group gets its baptism of fire. Dave Cockrum and Austin did the cover. [2/13]

CAPTAIN MARVEL No. 62, May. "Earth Skirmish" is by Doug Moench, Pat Broderick and Bruce Patterson. Captain Marvel and Stellerax battle in Washington, DC in the final issue of this title, although the story will be winding up in the revived MARVEL SPOTLIGHT, month after next. Broderick and Patterson did the cover. [2/20]

THE DEFENDERS No. 71, May. "Stranger And Stranger In A Strange Land" is by Ed Hannigan, Herb Trimpe and Jack Abel. The Defenders traverse the dimensional barrier in their attempt to cure Lunatik. Trimpe did the cover himself. [2/20]

FANTASTIC FOUR No. 206, May. The story in this issue is the work of Marv Wolfman, Keith Pollard and Joe Sinnott. The Fantastic Three are sentenced to death by a Skrull jury for crimes against the empire as the Nova plot continues. Pollard and Sinnott did the cover. [2/20]

HOWARD THE DUCK No. 31, May. "The Final Bong" is by Bill Mantlo, Gene Colan and Al Milgrom. Howard has his final battle with Dr. Bong -- at least as a color-coordinated duck. The magazine transforms into a black and white book in April. Colan and Milgrom did the cover. [2/20]

IRON MAN No. 122, May. "Journey" is by Jim Shooter, David Michelinie, Carmine Infantino and Bob Layton.

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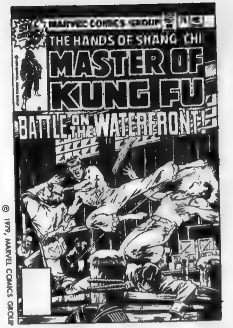
On his way home from his battle with Sub-Mariner, Iron Man (and the writers) take the opportunity to flash back to the Armored Avenger's origins. Dave Cockrum and Bob Layton did the cover. [2/20]

JOHN CARTER, WARLORD OF MARS No. 24, May. "Betrayal" is by Chris Claremont, Mike Vosburg and Ricardo Villamonte. John, Dejah and Tars battle for their lives against the master assassins of Mars -- but face the ultimate betrayal: cancellation. They may still appear in an annual this summer, however. [2/20]

MARVEL TEAM-UP No. 81, May. "Last Rites" is by Chris Claremont, Mike Vosburg and Steve Leialoha. Santana, who would be the one to help, I suppose, aids Spider-Man and Clea in their attempt to cure Dr. Strange's lycanthropy. What they don't know, though, is that Satana will kill him if she can't rid him of his facial hair. (Not counting his moustache, of course.) Al Milgrom and Leialoha did the cover. [2/20]



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MASTER OF KUNG FU No. 76, May. "Smoke Beads And Blood" is by Doug Moench, Mike Zeck and Gene Day. One the docks of London's limehouse district, Shang-Chi battles the minions of Zaran -- and thereby finds his destiny. Zeck and Rubinstein (Joe) did the cover. [2/20]

THE SPECTACULAR SPIDER-MAN No. 30, May. "Crimson Dust Of Death" is by Bill Mantlo, Jim Mooney and Frank Springer. Carrion reveals who he really is. Keith Pollard and Bob Layton did the cover. [2/20]

SPIDEY SUPER STORIES No. 40, May. [2/20]

STAR WARS No. 23, May. "The Last Gambit" is by Archie Goodwin, Carmine Infantino and Bob Wiacek.

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The Millenium Falcon escapes from The Wheel only to run smack dab into -- yep, you guessed it -- Darth Vader. And, did Han really kill Chewie? Infantino and Wiacek did the cover. [2/20]

SUPER-VILLAIN TEAM-UP No. 16, May. "Shall I Call The Master?" is by Peter Gillis, Carmine Infantino and Bruce Patterson. The Red Skull and Hatemonger, on the Skull's secret island, play mind games with some Jewish prisoners, as this book returns in what is planned as an annual outing (to retain trademark rights to the title). Frank Giacoia and Al Milgrom did the cover. [2/20]

TARZAN, LORD OF THE JUNGLE No. 24, May. "Epilogue" is by Bill Mantlo, Sal Buscema and Bob Hall. Tarzan wraps up his participation in the "Blood Money" adventure, while Jane's jeep is attacked by a rhino. John Buscema and Bob McLeod did the cover. [2/20]

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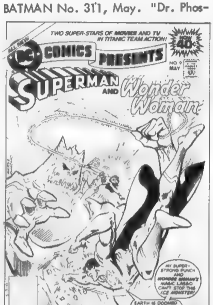
DC Coming Cov[illegible]s

ADVENTURE COMICS No. 463, May-June. The Justice Society leads off the issue with "Night Of The Soul Stealer" by Paul Levitz, Joe Staton and an unchosen inker. With their mentor dead and their secret identities exposed, Robin and The Huntress set out to discover the reason behind Batman's death. Meanwhile, Fredric Vaux unleashes a horde of elementals against the JSA. Flash battles "Urtumi, The Image Eater" in a story by Cary Bates, Don Heck and Frank McLaughlin. The creature has the deadly ability to devour the afterimages of beings that travel through time and space. Next up, Deadman discovers that he can return to life with the creation of a new body with a matter helmet in "Mind Over Murder" by Len Wein, Jose Garcia-Lopez and Francisco Chiaramonte. Wonder Woman faces killer bees attacking NASA headquarters on command in "The Insanity Swarm" by Gerry Conway, Joe Staton and Frank McLaughlin. And Aquaman again finds himself up against Aqualad and Mera as he attempts to save Atlantis from the large corporation in "Climax" by Paul Kupperberg, Don Heck and Bob Smith. This is the first issue edited by Ross Andru officially. Jose Luis Garcia-Lopez did the wraparound cover. [2/13]

BATMAN No. 311, May. "Dr. Phosphorus Is Back" and so is Steve Englehart, in this story by Irv Novick and Dick Giordano. Batman and Batgirl reteam for the first time in a decade (hard to believe, isn't it?) as Englehart revives a villain he introed in DETECTIVE COMICS. Jose Garcia-Lopez did the cover. [2/13]



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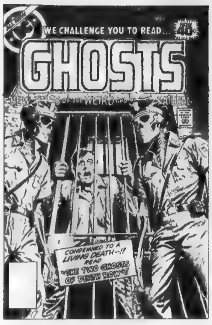
DC COMICS PRESENTS No. 9, May. "Invasion Of The Ice People" is by Martin Pasko, Joe Staton and Jack Abel.

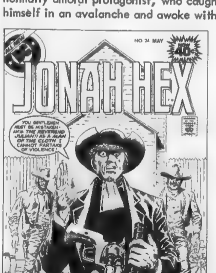


Superman and Wonder Woman team-up to stop a sculptor's ice giant brought to life by a mysterious force. Ross Andru and Dick Giordano did the cover. [2/13]

THE FLASH No. 273, May. "Harvest Of Hate" is by Cary Bates, Alex Saviuk and Frank Chiaramonte. In the wake of The Nephron Project, The Flash is called upon to quell a prison riot at the state prison. Also, more about the girl with the Master Mind. Ross Andru and Dick Giordano did the cover. [2/13]

GHOSTS No. 76, May. This issue's stories include: "The Phantom With The Flaming Finger" by Rico Rival; "The Two Ghosts Of Death Row" by Ken Landgraf and Bill Draut; and "Specter Of The Sahara" by Ruben Yandoc. Yeah, we're missing the writing credits again. Luis Dominguez did the cover. [2/13]

JONAH HEX No. 24, May. "Minister Of The Lord" by Mike Fleisher and Luis Dominguez is an apt description of our normally amoral protagonist, who caught himself in an avalanche and awoke with-



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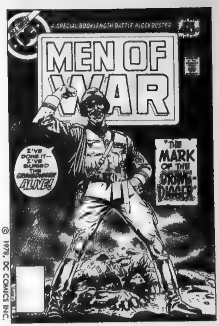
Identity" leads off the issue and it's by Marty Pasko, Alex Saviuk and Joe Giella. Superboy tries to protect his alter ego. "Coils Of The Cobra" by Gerry Conway, John Calnan and Vince Colletta features Lois Lane unraveling the death of a rock group's manager with the interference of another villain called Cobra. Clark Kent is featured in "Clark Kent's Super-Secret" as Lola Barnett figures out the reason Clark's hair never grows: he's bald! Cary Burkett, Kurt Schaffenberger and Joe Giella do the honors. "Victory Cup For A Dead Man" is by Gerry Conway, Schaffenberger and Frank McLaughlin. Jimmy Olsen drives a racing car to unravel a ghostly mystery. "Lois Lane's Super-Risk" by Cary Bates, Schaffenberger and Dan Adkins, features Mr. and Mrs. Superman with Lois



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out memory of his reasons for being dressed as a preacher -- or anything else -- and decides that he is what he looks like he is. For awhile, at least. Dominguez did the cover. [2/13]

JUSTICE LEAGUE OF AMERICA No. 166, May. "The Long Way Home" is by Gerry Conway, Dick Dillin and Frank McLaughlin. Returning after Zatanna's mother's death, the JLA believe an archaeological find in Israel is the key to a series of menacing world happenings, but find themselves controlled totally by the artifact when examining it. Dick Giordano did the cover. [2/13]

MEN OF WAR No. 16, May. A story titled either "The Mark Of The Gravedigger" or "Hide And Seek The Spy" by Jack C. Harris, Dick Ayers and Gerry Talaoc, features Ulysses Hazard in a booklengther. Joe Kubert did the cover. [2/13]

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THE SUPERMAN FAMILY No. 195, May-June. "Curse Of The Un-Secret

attempting to determine exactly which one of her husbands is the real person. Lastly, "Screamin' Demon" by Jack C. Harris, Don Heck and Frank Chiaramonte, features Supergirl in battle with a robot -- and Superboy. Ross Andru and Dick Giordano did the cover. [2/13]

THE UNEXPECTED No. 191, May-June. This giant's stories are: "Night Of The Voodoo Curse" by Carl Wessler and Alfredo Alcala; "Scream Along With Sammy" by Murray (Al Case) Boltinoff and Gerry Talaoc; "What Demon Dwells Within Me?" by George Kashdan and an unknown Philippines' artist; "The Darkness Beyond" by Bill Kelley and Fred Carrillo; "The Dead Don't Cry" by Jack Oleck, Marshall Rogers and Bob Layton; "The Harpies Are Coming" by Carl Wessler and Nestor Malgapo; "The Ouija Omen" by Wessler and Steve Bissette; "Sing A Song Of Sorcery" by Roger McKenzie and Vicente Alcazar; and "The Fine Art Of Murder" by Kashdan and Jerry Grandenetti. Joe

Orlando did a rare wraparound cover. [2/13]

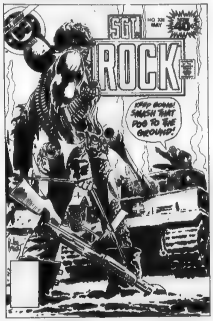
WEIRD WAR TALES No. 75, May. This issue features three stories: "The Forgery" by Wyatt Gwyon, Mike Sekowsky and Romeo Tanghal; "Fire Of The Gods" by Paul Kupperberg, Don Heck and John Celardo; and "Ghost Patrol" by Bob Rozakis, George Ruppert and Don Adkins. Joe Kubert did the cover. [2/13]

ACTION COMICS No. 495, May. "Attack Of The Ultimate Warrior" is by Cary Bates, Curt Swan and Frank Chiaramonte. Superman investigates the haunting of the boarded up Kent residence in Smallville as a foe from Krypton's past returns to plague him. Jose Garcia Lopez did the cover. [2/27]

THE BRAVE AND THE BOLD No. 150, May. The title and the guest star are a mystery in this anniversary issue by Bob Haney and Jim Aparo. All DC is saying is that Bruce Wayne has been kidnapped and can't escape without

revealing he is Batman, and has to turn to the guest-star for help. Their clue: The person has never teamed up with Batman before IN BRAVE AND BOLD. Aparo, with guest appearances by Gil Kane, Neal Adams and Nick Cardy artwork, did the cover. [2/27]

GREEN LANTERN No. 116, May. "My Ring... My Enemy" is by Denny O'Neil, Alex Saviuk and Frank Chiaramonte. Hal Jordan's ring isn't working worth beans and while he's heading for Oa



to know the reason why, his Earth substitute Guy Gardner takes his place. Together with chili specialist Oliver Queen, they battle a menace from the sky. Saviuk and Dick Giordano did the cover. [2/27]

HOUSE OF MYSTERY No. 268, May. Contents: "Night Call, Collect" by Wyatt Gwyon and Ruben Yandoc; "The Man Who Spoke With Spirits" by T. Casey Brennan and Jess Jodloman; and

"Dead Buddy!" by Bill Kelley and Jerry Grandenetti. Michael Kaluta did the cover. [2/27]

SGT. ROCK No. 328, May. "Waiting For Rock" is by Robert Kanigher and Frank Redondo. Rock is wounded and Easy sets up camp and waits for his return. Also, "I'm Your Buddy" by Kanigher and Joe Kubert is featured. Kubert did the cover. [2/27]

SUPERBOY AND THE LEGION OF SUPER-HEROES No. 251, May. "This Is The Day The Universe Dies" is by Jim (Steve Apollo) Starlin, Paul Levitz, and Dave Hunt. The treasonous Brainiac 5's evil offspring, Omega must be stopped by the Legion. Joe Staton and Dick Giordano did the cover. [2/27]

SUPER FRIENDS No. 20, May. "Revenge Of The Leafy Monsters" is by Denny (Sergius O'Shaughessy) O'Neil, Kurt Schaffenberger and Bob Smith. A movie producer gains fantastic powers and causes killer trees to attack Gotham City. Schaffenberger did the cover. [2/27]

ST Pocket Checklist

February 1979

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- ☐ BATTLESTAR GALACTICA #3
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- ☐ CAPTAIN AMERICA #233
- ☐ CAPTAIN MARVEL #62 [last issue]
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- ☐ JOHN CARTER, WARLORD OF MARS #24 [last issue]
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- ☐ NATIONAL LAMPOON #108 (Vol. 2 #8)

Warren

- ☐ EERIE #100
- ☐ VAMPIRELLA #77

SUPERMAN No. 335, May. "Mxyzptlk Spelled Backwards Is T-R-O-U-B-L-E!" is by Martin Pasko, Curt Swan and Frank Chiaramonte. Mr. Mxyzptlk returns to our dimension -- but wants Superman to help him return to the 5th where he was about to be married. Ross Andru and Dick Giordano did the cover. [2/27]

UNKNOWN SOLDIER No. 227, May. "The Blind Eye Of God" is by Robert Kanigher, Dick Ayers and Gerry Talaoc. The Unknown Soldier is sent on another undercover mission. Also Andy Stewart appears in "The Iron Fist" by Bill Kelley and Fred Carrillo. Joe Kubert did the cover. [2/27]

WARLORD No. 21, May. "Terminator" is by Mike Grell and Vince Colletta. Travis Morgan finds himself battling his magically-adult son, who has become a pawn of Deimos. Grell did the cover. [2/27]

WEIRD WESTERN TALES No. 55, May. "Sea Of Blood" is by Gerry Conway, Dick Ayers and Luis Dominguez. Doing undercover work for Lincoln, Brian must capture traitor Captain Samson Smith, the Blockade Breaker, who is running guns to the Confederacy. Unfortunately, the Union's soldiers don't know it. Dominguez did the cover. [2/27]

WONDER WOMAN No. 255, May. "The Menace Of The Mental Murderer" is by Paul Levitz, Jose Delbo and Jack Abel. Back at the United Nations, Wonder Woman must prevent a mentalist from assassinating delegates with his mind. Ross Andru and Dick Giordano did the cover. [2/27]

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RBCC #146 also contains a 9-page article on Mel Brook's and Gene Wilder's YOUNG FRANKENSTEIN, including fine stills and excellent artwork by Bruce Patterson, Eddie Eddings, Dennis Fujitake, Martin Cannon, Gordon Carleton and Monica Miller. A fitting tribute to a great film.

Other features in this issue include a 10-page complete index to TV's AVENGERS (the 83 old episodes and the 26 new), R.C. HARVEY's look at THE DISNEY VERSION, DON ROSA's INFORMATION CENTER, DON ROSA'S COVER GALLERY on "The Great DC Gorilla Fetish" including 27 examples from 1951-1967, and more including art by FRED HEMBECK, MIKE ZECK and others.

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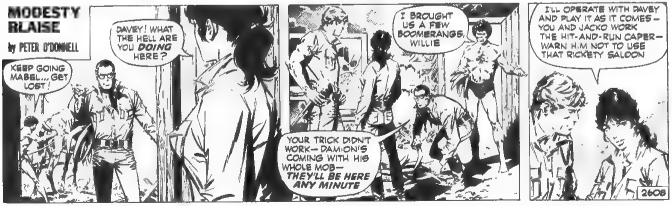
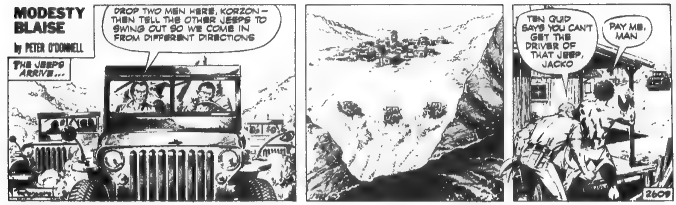
MODESTY BLAISE
by Peter O'Donnell & Enrique Romero

MODESTY BLAISE
by PETER O'DONNELL
WILLIE IMITATES MR. WU SMITH'S VOICE
FOR REASONS BEST EXPLAINED LATER, I AM AT THE GHOST TOWN KORZON VISITED RECENTLY— CAN YOU JOIN ME, DAMION? I HAVE DISCOVERED SOMETHING VERY DISTURBING HERE
I'LL BE WITH YOU IN A FEW HOURS, WU — DO I NEED ANY MEN?
I SUGGEST ONLY KORZON THE FEWER WHO KNOW OF THIS, THE BETTER
DAMION SIGNS OFF
2605
THAT WAS UNDOUBTEDLY MR. GARVIN — HE IS AN EXCELLENT MIMIC
LUCKY YOU WERE HERE, WU. HE'D HAVE FOOLED ME... I THOUGHT THEY WERE ALL DEAD BY NOW!

MODESTY BLAISE
by PETER O'DONNELL
THREE JEEPS MOVE ACROSS THE OUTBACK
SOMETHING'S GONE WRONG, DOC...
...DAMION'S COMING WITH HIS WHOLE ARMY!
OH, MY GOD, MODESTY AND WILLIE HAVEN'T A GUN BETWEEN THEM
THE TRACK LOOPS OUT ROUND THE END OF THE HILLS — I CAN GET THERE FIRST ON MABEL
SHE'LL TAKE THE TWO OF US — AND DON'T TRY TO ARGUE, JACKO!
2606

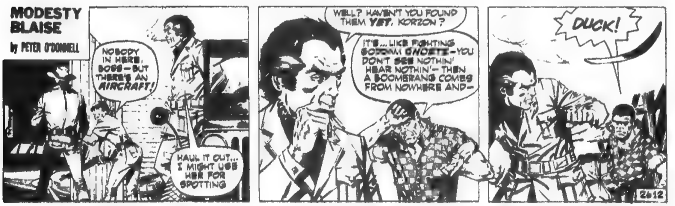
MODESTY BLAISE
by PETER O'DONNELL
MODESTY AND WILLIE ARE IN TROUBLE — I'M GOING DOWN WITH JACKO
SHE TOLD ME THIS ISN'T YOUR LINE AND I MUSTN'T ENCOURAGE YOU...
...BUT I DON'T HAVE TO LISTEN TO ANY POMMIE GIRL — YOU DO WHAT YOU HAVE TO, DAVEY, AND GOOD LUCK... AND COME BACK SAFE
A FEW MINUTES LATER...
HEY, PRINCESS — LOOK! IT'S MABEL — WITH JACKO AND DAVEY UP!
2607


MODESTY BLAISE
by PETER O'DONNELL
KEEP GOING, MABEL... GET LOST!
DAVEY! WHAT THE HELL ARE YOU DOING HERE?
I BROUGHT US A FEW BOOMERANGS, WILLIE
YOUR TRICK DIDN'T WORK — DAMION'S COMING WITH HIS WHOLE MOB — THEY'LL BE HERE ANY MINUTE
I'LL OPERATE WITH DAVEY AND PLAY IT AS IT COMES — YOU AND JACKO WORK THE HIT-AND-RUN CAPER — WARN HIM NOT TO USE THAT RICKETY SALOON
2608


MODESTY BLAISE
by PETER O'DONNELL
DROP TWO MEN HERE, KORZON — THEN TELL THE OTHER JEEPS TO SWING OUT SO WE COME IN FROM DIFFERENT DIRECTIONS
THE JEEPS ARRIVE...
TEN QUID SAYS YOU CAN'T GET THE DRIVER OF THAT JEEP, JACKO
PAY ME, MAN
2809

MODESTY BLAISE
by PETER O'DONNELL
JACKO'S BOOMERANG SKIMS THROUGH THE AIR IN A WIDE CURVE, THEN SWOOPS DOWN UPON ITS TARGET
UHH!
BACK, DAVEY — THEY'RE COMING THROUGH THE WALL!
BEAT THAT, WILLIE BOY!
FLUKE...
2810

MODESTY BLAISE
by PETER O'DONNELL
THE DAZED MEN ARE PROMPTLY KNOCKED OUT
NOT WITH YOUR FIST, DAVEY — BONE ON BONE HURTS
I'VE JUST PROVED THAT, WOMAN! OH, BUT IT WAS WORTH IT...
I TELL YOU, WHEN KAYO COLLINS GETS GOING —
SHUT UP AND SEE IF THAT JEEP STILL WORKS — I'VE GOT AN IDEA
2811


MODESTY BLAISE
by PETER O'DONNELL
NOBODY IN HERE, BOSS — BUT THERE'S AN AIRCRAFT!
HAUL IT OUT... I MIGHT USE HER FOR SPOTTING
WELL? HAVEN'T YOU FOUND THEM YET, KORZON?
IT'S... LIKE FIGHTING GODDAM GHOSTS — YOU DON'T SEE NOTHIN', HEAR NOTHIN' — THEN A BOOMERANG COMES FROM NOWHERE AND—
DUCK!
2812

BEN CASEY
by Neal Adams

WHAT'S THE NAME OF THAT MIRACLE MEDICINE...OBECALP? WHAT'S IN IT?
THE REAL MIRACLE IS INSIDE YOU, STUART. YOUR SPIRIT...YOUR CHARACTER...YOUR FAITH IN YOURSELF. NOTHING COULD HAVE HELPED WITHOUT THOSE.
EAT
THE SUN'S BRIGHTER...THE AIR'S FRESHER...SKY'S BLUER ...I EVEN FEEL HAPPY ABOUT BEING ALIVE!
SUGAR AND WATER...MIXED WITH EQUAL PORTIONS OF FAITH, HOPE AND CHARITY.
6-27
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THAT MUSIC... SOUNDS LIKE A MAN TO LIFE! NATURE...LIFE ...IS UNFAIR. A YOUNG GENIUS CUT DOWN IN HIS PRIME...
6-28
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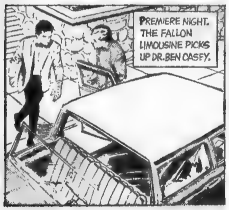

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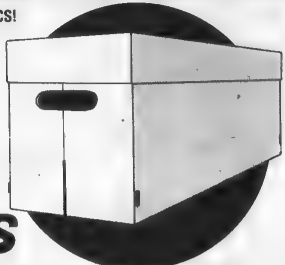

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Plus a whole host of features, columns, and specials, including Clay Kimball's sometimes humorous, sometimes cynical columns and Ride the Tiger, a fanzine review column that goes a lot further than just listing addresses and contents; along with a through examination of the new Crestford Encyclopedia of Comics, and presenting a full length letter column which includes comments from golden-age comic pros on some of our past articles.

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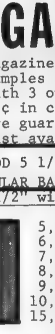

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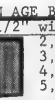

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BATMAN
by Bob Kane

I KILLED JENSEN JUST BY TOUCHING HIM WITH MY GLOWING HANDS! WHY? HOW?
MY EXPERIMENTS WITH RADIUM SALTS HAS EXPOSED ME FOR SO LONG...INSIDE MY BODY RADIO-ACTIVE ATOMS ARE CONSTANTLY SPLITTING, RELEASING CONCENTRATED RAYS THAT KILL UPON CONTACT.
SO I HAVE IT—WHAT SOME MEN HAVE WANTED SINCE TIME BEGAN! I, PROFESSOR KNELL, HAVE THE TOUCH OF DEATH.

A HURRY CALL, INSPECTOR! YE-ELL, A HOUSEMAID OVERHEARD HER BOSS—IS PROFESSOR KNELL—SAY HE KILLED HIS LAB ASSISTANT! I'LL HAVE TO CHECK.
MIND IF ROBIN AND I GO ALONG?
IN THERE!
A BODY ON THE FLOOR, I GET YOUR HANDS UP! PROFESSOR—YOU'RE UNDER ARREST FOR MURDER.

PROFESSOR, YOU'RE UNDER ARREST FOR THE MURDER OF YOUR ASSISTANT!
NO! IT WASN'T MURDER! IT WAS THE RADIUM. NO! DON'T TOUCH ME!
AGGGH!
FOOL! I WARNED YOU! I HAVE THE TOUCH OF DEATH!
HE'S DEAD!
LOOK! THE PROFESSOR - HE'S GLOWING!
CRASH!

STOP!
WE'LL NEVER CATCH HIM NOW! HE'S GRABBED THE PROWL CAR!
AND THIS IS ONE TIME I DIDN'T BRING THE BATMOBILE!
I MUST ABANDON THIS CAR! STUPID POLICE! DON'T THEY KNOW IT WAS AN ACCIDENT? BUT THEY WON'T ARREST ME FOR MURDER, I'LL HIDE...

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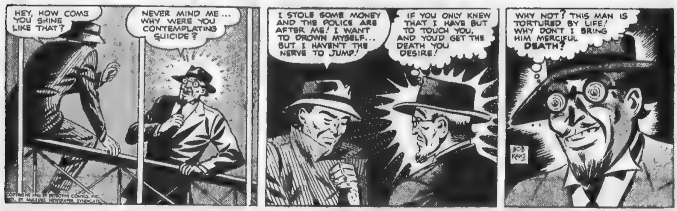
The Menomonee Falls Gazette

THE PROFESSOR WON'T GET FAR.
STRANGE HOW KELLY TOUCHED THE PROFESSOR, THEN DROPPED DEAD! I WONDER IF I SHUT OFF THE LIGHT BY CLOSING THE DOOR.
AH! I THOUGHT SO!
LOOK! KELLY'S HAND-WHERE IT TOUCHED THE PROFESSOR... IT'S GLOWING!
SO ARE HIS LAB ASSISTANT AND THIS DEAD DOG... ALL GLOWING LIKE THE PROFESSOR!
THEN, THE PROFESSOR WASN'T LYING WHEN HE SAID HE HAD THE TOUCH OF DEATH!

THE PROFESSOR HAS THE TOUCH OF DEATH?... BUT HOW-?
THE PROFESSOR MENTIONED RADIUM! AND THESE LEAD SHIELDS INDICATE PROLONGED EXPERIMENTS WITH RADIUM!
MEDICAL MEN SAY A PERSON CAN BUILD UP AN IMMUNITY TO ARSENIC POISONING BY TAKING SMALL DOSES OVER A LONG PERIOD OF TIME...
...PERHAPS, BY SOME STRANGE SCIENTIFIC PARADOX, THE PROFESSOR HAS BUILT UP AN IMMUNITY TO RADIUM...
...WHICH WOULD EXPLAIN WHY HE LIVES... AND THE PEOPLE HE TOUCHES... DIE!

TELL ME, DID THE PROFESSOR COMPLAIN OF ANY ILLNESS?
WHY... YES... HE'S BEEN HAVING HEADACHES!
THEN THE RADIUM IS DESTROYING HIS BRAIN! THE PROFESSOR IS GOING MAD! NOW ANY-THING CAN HAPPEN!
THAT NIGHT, A FIGURE GLOWING WITH AN UNEARTHLY LIGHT, WARILY CROSSES GOTHAM BRIDGE...
THEY MUST NOT FIND ME! WHAT'S THAT, MAN DOING?
STOP! DON'T JUMP!
DON'T WORRY, MISTER... I HAVEN'T GOT THE NERVE!


HEY, HOW COME YOU SHINE LIKE THAT?
NEVER MIND ME... WHY WERE YOU CONTEMPLATING SUICIDE?
I STOLE SOME MONEY AND THE POLICE ARE AFTER ME! I WANT TO DROWN MYSELF... BUT I HAVEN'T THE NERVE TO JUMP!
IF YOU ONLY KNEW THAT I HAVE BUT TO TOUCH YOU, AND YOU'D GET THE DEATH YOU DESIRE!
WHY NOT? THIS MAN IS TORTURED BY LIFE! WHY DON'T I BRING HIM MERCIFUL DEATH?

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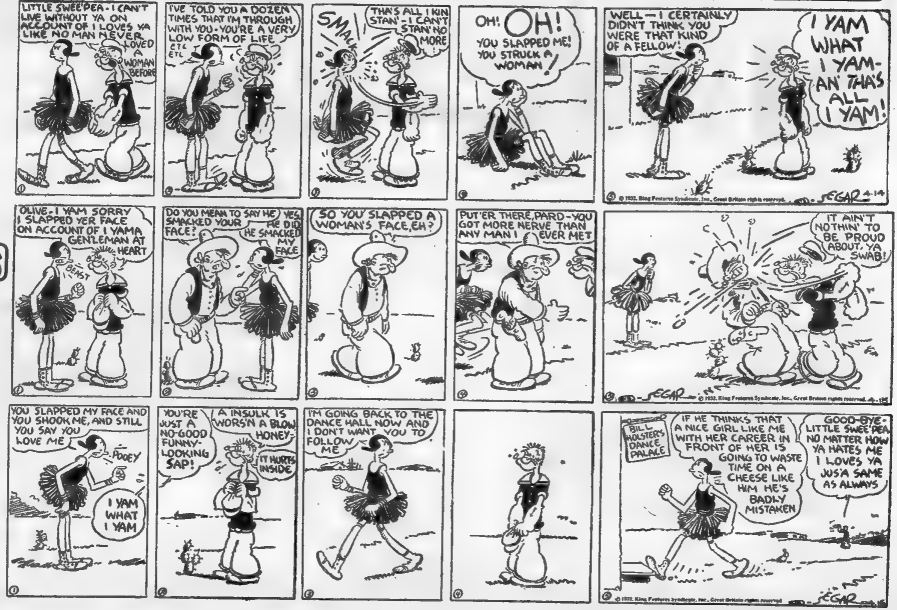
POPEYE by E.C. Segar

YOU BUTTED HIS HEAD INTO THIS POST AND NEARLY KILLED HIM!!
YOU'RE AN UNCIVILIZED BRUTE
COME, SET BY ME, OLIVE I WANTS TO TALK TO YOU
IT AIN'T GONER HURT YA TO SET DOWN AN TALK, IS IT?
OH, ALL RIGHT- I'LL SIT DOWN, BUT ONLY FOR A SECOND
OOOOOW!
?!
LISTEN, LITTLE SWEE'PEA, I WANTS TO TELL YA HOW I LOVES YA
I WON'T LISTEN
I SAID I WON'T LISTEN TO YOU!
OH- YA WON'T HAH ?!
I SEZ YA WILL
ALL RIGHT- I'LL LISTEN
AWRIGHT THEN - NOW IN THE FIRST PLACE - I LOVES YA LIKE NO MAN NEVER LOVED A WOMAN BEFORE ETC
SO THIS IS GOOD-BYE, HAH?
YES- I NEVER WANT TO SEE YOU AGAIN
GOOD-BYE, LITTLE SWEE'PEA
AHOY-!! YOO-HOO OLIVE OYL!
I JUS' FOUN' OUT I KIN NOT LIVE WITHOUT YA - SO THAS WHY - THAS WHY HERE I YAM AGAIN
CAN'T YOU UNDERSTAND ENGLISH? I'M THROUGH WITH YOU!!
SEGAR

41

The Menomonee Falls Gazette


LITTLE SWEETPEA - I CAN'T LIVE WITHOUT YA ON ACCOUNT OF I LOVES YA LIKE NO MAN NEVER LOVED A WOMAN BEFORE
I'VE TOLD YOU A DOZEA TIMES THAT I'M THROUGH WITH YOU - YOU'RE A VERY LOW FORM OF LIFE ETC ETC ETC
SMACK
THAS ALL I KIN STAN' - I CAN'T STAN' NO MORE
OH! OH! YOU SLAPPED ME! YOU STRUCK A WOMAN!
WELL — I CERTAINLY DIDN'T THINK YOU WERE THAT KIND OF A FELLOW!
I YAM WHAT I YAM - AN THAS ALL I YAM!
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SEGAR 4-14
OLIVE - I YAM SORRY I SLAPPED YER FACE ON ACCOUNT OF I YAMA GENTLEMAN AT HEART
BLUSH
DO YOU MEAN TO SAY HE SMACKED YOUR FACE!
YES, HE DID HE SMACKED MY FACE
SO YOU SLAPPED A WOMAN'S FACE, EH?
PUT'ER THERE, PARD - YOU GOT MORE NERVE THAN ANY MAN I EVER MET
IT AIN'T NOTHIN' TO BE PROUD ABOUT, YA SWAB!
SEGAR
© 1935, King Features Syndicate, Inc., Great Britain rights reserved.
YOU SLAPPED MY FACE AND YOU SHOOK ME, AND STILL YOU SAY YOU LOVE ME!
POOEY
I YAM WHAT I YAM
YOU'RE JUST A NO-GOOD FUNNY-LOOKING SAP!
A INSULK IS WORSN'A BLOW HONEY
IT HURTS INSIDE
I'M GOING BACK TO THE DANCE HALL NOW AND I DON'T WANT YOU TO FOLLOW ME
BILL HOLSTER'S DANCE PALACE
IF HE THINKS THAT A NICE GIRL LIKE ME WITH HER CAREER IN FRONT OF HER IS GOING TO WASTE TIME ON A CHEESE LIKE HIM HE'S BADLY MISTAKEN
GOOD-BYE - LITTLE SWEETPEA, NO MATTER HOW YA HATES ME I LOVES YA JUS'A SAME AS ALWAYS
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SEGAR

SUPERMAN by Siegel & Shuster

EN ROUTE TO AMERICA FROM THE DEEP ASIATIC KINGDOM OF TIMMANDU, SUPERMAN CARRIES JIMMY OLSEN HOME AT LIGHTNING SPEED...
WE'VE FINISHED WITH THE PACIFIC (OPPRESSION) AND NOW WE'RE ACROSS THE STATES - WE'LL SOON BE BACK IN METROPOLIS JIMMY!
WHAT'S THE MATTER? I'VE LEFT THE ONLY GIRL IN THE WORLD BACK THERE.
AND HERE WE ARE - HOME - METROPOLIS - YOUR OWN APARTMENT...
I AIN'T INTERESTED - BUT GOSH! WHO'S THAT DOWN THERE?
SOLLY, BUT I'M GLAD TO SEE YOU, JIMMY. YOU MISSED YOU! - WHERE'VE YOU BEEN?
GEEE - GOSH... BALLY MALONE! I - I'M GLAD TO SEE YOU, TOO!
IT JUST PROVES, JIMMY, THAT SOMETIMES WE SEARCH HALFWAY 'ROUND THE WORLD FOR SOMETHING THERE WAITING RIGHT IN OUR OWN BACK YARD!
TWO EVENTS - SEPARATED BY MANY MILES - OCCUR SIMULTANEOUSLY. ONE IS IMPORTANT, THE OTHER COMMONPLACE...
SO LET'S MAKE THIS FIRST STOP ON MY BOND SELLING TOUR SOMETHING FOR OTHER TOWNS TO SHOOT AT! YOUR DOLLARS ARE LIKE THESE BRICKS - WHEN PUT TOGETHER, THEY FORM A MIGHTY BULWARK AGAINST OUR ENEMIES!
JUST THE POOR LITTLE RICH GIRL - THAT'S ME. THE CAR WOULD HAVE TO BREAK DOWN ONLY THREE MILES FROM METROPOLIS. GUESS I'LL HAVE TO BE TOWED IN!
TWO EVENTS WITH NO APPARENT CONNECTION, BUT THE LINKS OF CIRCUMSTANCE THAT WILL JOIN THESE TWO ARE ALREADY BEING FORGED!...
FROM A CENTRAL NEWS BUREAU, TWO UNRELATED STORIES ARE FLASHED BY NATIONAL TELETYPE TO THE TICKERS OF THE NATION'S PRESS....
STALLED ON HIGHWAY LEADING INTO METROPOLIS, GIRL IN METROPOLIS TO WED SUPERMAN ON NATIONAL HOOK-UP FOR WAR BOND DRIVE...
IN A SMALL TOWN NEWSPAPER OFFICE...
HOW'S IT GOIN'? GOT IT FIXED YET?
SHE STILL SKIPS, CHIEF - BUT I DUNNO DO UNTIL THAT NEW TICKER GETS HERE SEE - SOMETHING'S COMING IN NOW.
CLICK! CLICK! CLICK!
HUH? WHAT'S THIS? GREAT SCOTT!
EXTRA! EXTRA!
ALINE WAIL, RICHEST GIRL IN METROPOLIS, TO WED SUPERMAN ON NATIONAL TOUR
IN A SMALL TOWN NEWSPAPER OFFICE, A BROKEN NEWS TICKER HEARS TWO SEPARATE FLASHES AND...
HOLD THE PRESS! BREAK UP THAT FRONT PAGE! A LETTER JUST CAME OFF THE WIRES!
HELLO - CONSOLIDATED PRESS? THIS IS THE DAILY CLARION-EAST LORING... THAT SUPERMAN FLASH THAT JUST CAME IN - ANY MORE DETAILS? NOTHING? YOU SURE? OKAY - I'LL PAD IT OUT MYSELF.
MUKTRY - READ ALL ABOUT IT!
EXTRA! EXTRA! SUPERMAN TO WED HEIRESS!
METROPOLIS... THE OFFICE OF THE DAILY PLANET...
THAT WAS JUST FLASHED IN FROM EAST LORING. WHAT DO YOU MAKE OF IT, LOIS?
WHY - IT'S CRAZY! IT'S IMPOSSIBLE! HE WOULDN'T MARRY ANY ONE. BUT - I MEAN - HE WOULD HAVE TOLD ME!
SUPERMAN ENGAGED TO MARRY ALINE WAIL?! WELL, I'M NOT PRINTING IT WITHOUT CHECKING, BESIDES, SHE WAS REPORTED ENGAGED TO A MR. AUBREY JONES SOME TIME BACK. UNLESS... HM... WHAT A STORY THAT WOULD BE!
UNLESS WHAT?
UNLESS MR. AUBREY JONES IS SUPERMAN!
NONSENSE! ABSOLUTELY ABSURD! WHY - SUPERMAN COULDN'T BE INTERESTED IN A GIDDY THING LIKE ALINE WAIL!
OR - OR COULD HE?
WHAT ARE YOU LOOKING SO FUNNY ABOUT? GET GOING! SEE ALINE WAIL! SEE JONES! TRY TO CONTACT SUPERMAN! THIS MIGHT BE THE BIGGEST SCOOP OF YOUR CAREER!
I - I HOPE NOT!
EDITOR

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The Menomonee Falls Gazette

WHOEVER SENT THAT STORY FROM EAST LOSTVILLE MUST BE CRAZY. THE IDEA OF SUPERMAN BEING ENGAGED TO THAT DIZZY REPORTER, LOIS LANE, IS TOO ABSURD FOR WORDS!
AND PERRY WHITE THINKS AUBREY JONES, HER PIANO MOVER, MIGHT BE SUPERMAN! GRACIOUS—IF SUPERMAN WERE ENGAGED TO THAT HUSSY, HE COULDN'T KEEP IT FROM ME!
HERE'S THE MAIL HOUSE—AND THE ENTRANCE IS JUST DOWN THE STREET. WELL—I'LL SOON PUT AN END TO THE SILLIEST RUMOR OF THE YEAR!
BRING IT OVER THIS WAY, SUPERMAN!
YES, DEAR. BUT I WISH YOU'D STOP CALLING ME SUPERMAN. SOMEBODY MIGHT HEAR YOU!
SHE—SHE CALLED HIM SUPERMAN, AUBREY!
NO, SUPERMAN—OR AUBREY, IF YOU'RE SO SENSITIVE—THE PIANO WON'T DO THERE. CARRY IT OVER HERE!
REST IT RIGHT WHERE YOU'RE STANDING, THANKS, AUBREY. WITHOUT YOUR HELP, I'D NEVER HAVE BEEN ABLE TO FIX THE STAGE FOR THE LAWN PARTY TONIGHT.
I SEE IT, BUT—BUT I CAN'T BELIEVE IT! I JUST CAN'T!
AN UNDISCOVERED TYPOGRAPHICAL ERROR SENDS LOIS LANE TO CHECK A STARTLING STORY FLASHED TO THE DAILY PLANET FROM A SMALL TOWN PAPER...
PUT IT DOWN THERE, SUPERMAN!
DON'T CALL ME SUPERMAN!
AND SHE JUST CALLED HIM SUPERMAN! SO—IT'S TRUE! AUBREY WAIL IS ENGAGED TO SUPERMAN! AND SUPERMAN IS AUBREY JONES!
WHAT CAN HE SEE IN HER, ANYWAY? I MEAN—SHE, PRACTICALLY WINDS HIM AROUND HER LITTLE FINGER, MAKING HIM MOVE PIANOS AND—AND...
WELL—I'M NOT HANGING AROUND TO WATCH HER MAKE A FOOL OF HIM ANY LONGER. I'VE GOT A STORY TO WRITE!
THIS PAPIER-MÂCHÉ PIANO LOOKS SO REAL, I GUESS I ACTUALLY DO LOOK LIKE SUPERMAN WHEN I CARRY IT.
UNAWARE THAT THE PIANO SHE SAW HIM LIFT WAS MADE OF PAPIER-MÂCHÉ, LOIS IS CONVINCED THAT AUBREY JONES IS SUPERMAN...
SUPERMAN IS AUBREY JONES—AND HE'S ENGAGED TO ALINE WAIL. WHAT A STORY—YET HOW CAN I WRITE IT?
STILL—SUPERMAN DIDN'T ASK ME TO KEEP HIS SECRET. SO WHY SHOULD I? HE NEVER EVEN TRUSTED ME WITH IT. HE NEVER TRUSTED ME WITH ANYTHING. BESIDES, IT'S MY DUTY NOT TO SUPPRESS THE TRUTH...
THAT FLASH FROM EAST LOSTVILLE WAS ON THE LEVEL, CHIEF! HERE'S YOUR STORY!
SO AUBREY JONES IS SUPERMAN! GREAT! WONDERFUL! THE YEAR'S BIGGEST STORY! BUT—SAY, MAN, YOU DON'T FEEL WELL?
WHY, I—I FEEL SIMPLY MARVELOUS! DIDN'T I JUST GET THE BIGGEST SCOOP OF THE YEAR?
WHAT A DAY! COVERED THREE THOUSAND MILES, SPOKE IN TWENTY CITIES, AND SOLD OVER TWO MILLION IN BONDS! NOT BAD EVEN FOR SUPERMAN!
LOIS'LL TURN GREEN WITH ENVY WHEN CLARK KENT TURNS UP WITH THE DAY'S STORY! SUPERMAN'S WAR BOND CAMPAIGN, BUT I'LL DO HER GOOD.
HERE'S A HOT STORY, CHIEF. "SUPERMAN SPANS CONTINENT IN PHENOMENAL BOND DRIVE!"
GO PEDDLE YOUR ANTI CLIMAXES, CLARK—AND HAVE A LOOK AT A REAL STORY JUST OFF THE PRESS!
BUT—BUT THIS IS IMPOSSIBLE!
DAILY PLANET EXTRA! SUPERMAN'S SECRET REVEALED!!!

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Nobody covers the comics scene like The Comics Journal!

Over the past two years, THE COMICS JOURNAL has grown phenomenally, from a modestly successful fanzine with a circulation of 3,000, to become, with a paid circulation of 9,500, the best-selling magazine about comics! You may ask yourself how THE COMICS JOURNAL has been able to increase its readership three-fold in less than two years. The answer lies in the JOURNAL's stimulating mixture of editorial content: exciting articles, interviews, columns, reviews, news, and the finest art in comics fandom!

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The JOURNAL's interviews with comics' foremost artists, writers, editors, and publishers have become its most acclaimed feature. Long, involved, and fascinating, our interviews include some of the most remarkable statements and opinions ever recorded in a comics fanzine. From Gil Kane calling DC Comics "conservative to the point of sterility" to Paul Levitz accusing fandom of "talking to itself, which is a sign of madness"... from Steve Gerber claiming that his fellow Marvel writers were guilty of "political maneuvering" within the company to Neal Adams denouncing several well-known writers as "whining, bitching crybabies," the JOURNAL's interviews are the most startling and informative anywhere. [Coming up in future issues: Denny O'Neil, Will Eisner, Joe Staton, and *Heavy Metal* star Philippe Druillet.]

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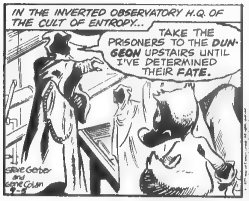
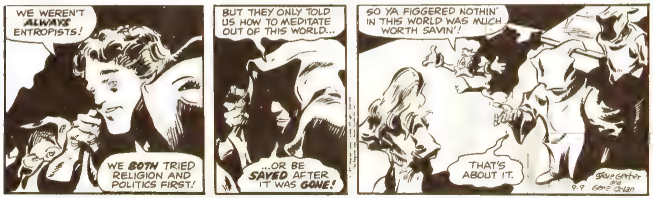
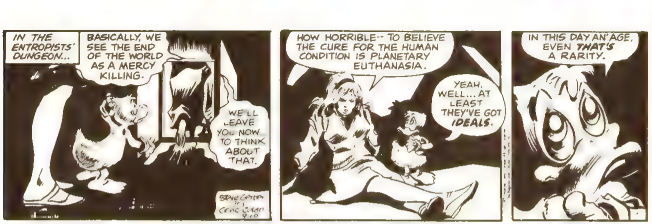
by Steve Gerber & Gene Colan

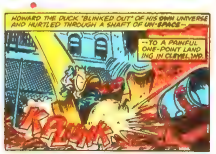

IN THE INVERTED OBSERVATORY H.Q. OF THE CULT OF ENTROPY...
TAKE THE PRISONERS TO THE DUNGEON UPSTAIRS UNTIL I'VE DETERMINED THEIR FATE.
Steve Gerber and Gene Colan

The Menomonee Falls Gazette

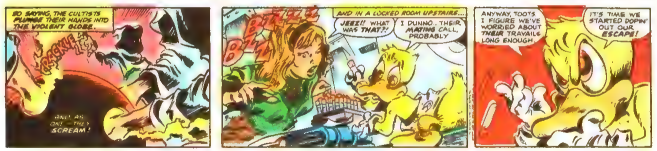

WE WEREN'T ALWAYS ENTROPISTS!
WE BOTH TRIED RELIGION AND POLITICS FIRST!
BUT THEY ONLY TOLD US HOW TO MEDITATE OUT OF THIS WORLD...
...OR BE SAVED AFTER IT WAS GONE!
SO YA FIGGERED NOTHIN' IN THIS WORLD WAS MUCH WORTH SAVIN'!
THAT'S ABOUT IT.
Steve Gerber Gene Colan


IN THE ENTROPISTS' DUNGEON...
BASICALLY, WE SEE THE END OF THE WORLD AS A MERCY KILLING...
WE'LL LEAVE YOU NOW TO THINK ABOUT THAT!
HOW HORRIBLE-- TO BELIEVE THE CURE FOR THE HUMAN CONDITION IS PLANETARY EUTHANASIA.
YEAH, WELL... AT LEAST THEY'VE GOT IDEALS.
IN THIS DAY AN' AGE, EVEN THAT'S A RARITY.

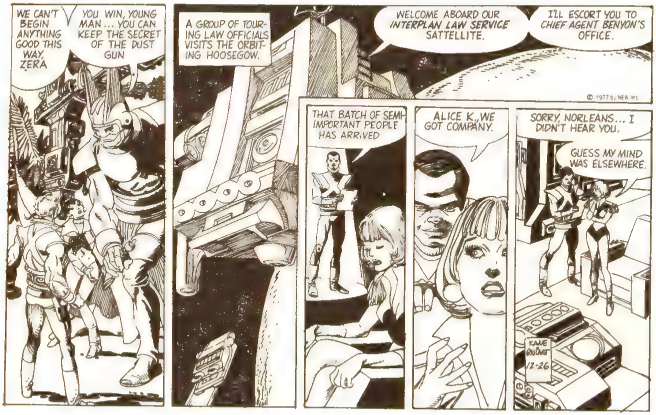
TRAPPED IN A WORLD HE NEVER MADE
HOWARD THE DUCK
Steve Gerber Gene Colan
OUR UNIVERSE OF 13 BILLION GALAXIES IS BUT ONE OF AN INFINITE NUMBER OF SUCH UNIVERSES
--CONTAINING IN THE SAME SPACE, BUT IN A DIFFERENT IMAGE-SPHERE, ONLY THE COSMIC RES MAINTAINS THEIR SEPARATENESS.
ONE DAY, THAT RES SHIFTED-- JUST A TAD


HOWARD THE DUCK, BLINKED OUT OF HIS OWN UNIVERSE AND HURTLED THROUGH A VARITY OF UN-SPACE...
--TO A PAINFUL ONE-POINT LANDING IN CLEVELAND.
KRAKK

THE HEADQUARTERS OF THE EAST OF ENTROPY...
THE DUCK'S REVELATION HAS SHATTERED OUR ORIGINAL STRATEGY! INOPERATIVE!
WE MUST GATHER MORE ENERGY, TAX OUR POWERS TO THE LIMIT...
THAT WE MAY BUILD A BOMB POWERFUL ENOUGH TO REND THE VERY FABRIC OF DIMENSIONAL SPACE!
TOWARD THAT END, WE MUST ENGAGE THE TOTALITY OF OUR BEINGS!
WE ARE READY.
WE MUST BECOME 100% ABSORBENT, BARGED HEAD TO TOE WITH ANTI-ENERGY!


SO SAYING, THE CULTISTS PLUNGE THEIR HANDS INTO THE VIOLENT GLOBE.
AAAIEE! AH, ON! FOR A SCREAM!
AND IN A LOCKED ROOM UPSTAIRS...
--EEEEE! WHAT NOW THAT?!
I DUNNO, THERE'S RAPTURE CALL PROBABLY.
ANYWAY, TOOTS I FIGURE WE'VE WORRIED ABOUT THEIR TRIVIALS LONG ENOUGH.
IT'S TIME WE STARTED DOIN' OUR ESCAPE!

STAR HAWKS
by Ron Goulart & Gil Kane


WE CAN'T BEGIN ANYTHING GOOD THIS WAY, ZERA
YOU WIN, YOUNG MAN... YOU CAN KEEP THE SECRET OF THE DUST GUN
A GROUP OF TOURING LAW OFFICIALS VISITS THE ORBITING HOOSEGOW.
WELCOME ABOARD OUR INTERPLAN LAW SERVICE SATTELLITE.
I'LL ESCORT YOU TO CHIEF AGENT BENYON'S OFFICE.
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THAT BATCH OF SEMI-IMPORTANT PEOPLE HAS ARRIVED
ALICE K., WE GOT COMPANY.
SORRY, NORLEANS... I DIDN'T HEAR YOU.
GUESS MY MIND WAS ELSEWHERE.
KANE 12-26

ON SCREEN A YOU SEE OUR REHAB FACILITY...
AND ON B OUR CRIME DATA CENTER.
AHUM... SCREEN B LOOKS LIKE A CRIME DATA CENTER TO ME, CHIEF AGENT BENYON!
KANE 12-27
YES, YOU'RE RIGHT. EXCUSE ME
I'M AGENT PERKINS...
...REX JAXAN IS ON AN ASSIGNMENT.
YES, OF COURSE...
I WASN'T THINKING.
NOW I'LL HAVE SOMEONE ESCORT YOU THROUGH THE HOOSEGOW FOR A FIRST-HAND LOOK.
THIS IS AGENT JAXAN WHO---

The Menomonee Falls Gazette

THINK THEY NEED YOU DOWN IN THERAPY MORE THAN I DO, AUNT JENNY.
LAND SAKES, ALICE K., WHAT'S THE GOOD OF MY BEING A FIRST-CLASS ROBOT COUNSELOR...
...IF I CAN'T HELP MY FRIENDS!
KANE & KUMMT 12-28
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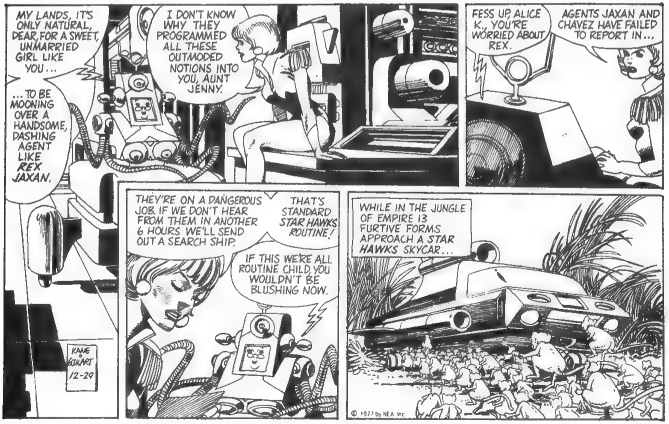
I DON'T ESPECIALLY FEEL IN NEED OF GUIDANCE, AUNT JENNY.
GOODNESS ME, CHILD, I KNOW YOU'VE BEEN FRETTING ABOUT REX JAXAN.
I'M CONCERNED ABOUT ALL THE STAR HAWKS.
I DON'T PLAY FAVORITES!
YES, WHAT IS IT, NORLEANS?
WANTED TO TELL YOU WE STILL CAN'T CONTACT REX JAXAN.


MY LANDS, IT'S ONLY NATURAL, DEAR, FOR A SWEET, UNMARRIED GIRL LIKE YOU...
...TO BE MOONING OVER A HANDSOME, DASHING AGENT LIKE REX JAXAN.
I DON'T KNOW WHY THEY PROGRAMMED ALL THESE OUTMODED NOTIONS INTO YOU, AUNT JENNY.
KANE & KUMMT 12-29
FESS UP, ALICE K., YOU'RE WORRIED ABOUT REX.
AGENTS JAXAN AND CHAVEZ HAVE FAILED TO REPORT IN...
THEY'RE ON A DANGEROUS JOB. IF WE DON'T HEAR FROM THEM IN ANOTHER 6 HOURS, WE'LL SEND OUT A SEARCH SHIP!
THAT'S STANDARD STAR HAWKS ROUTINE!
IF THIS WERE ALL ROUTINE, CHILD, YOU WOULDN'T BE BLUSHING NOW.
WHILE IN THE JUNGLE OF EMPIRE 13 FURTIVE FORMS APPROACH A STAR HAWKS SKYCAR...
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STAR HAWKS
by Ron Goulart & Gil Kane

IN THE EMPIRE IS JUNGLE...
YOU CALL YOURSELF LAW AGENTS!
YET YOU WON'T HELP DEFEAT A DICTATOR!
WE WON'T HELP YOU KILL HIM, NO.
IF YOU WERE REALLY INTERESTED IN JUSTICE...
...YOU'D DESTROY THE SECRET WEAPONS LAB THE REGIME HAS SET UP!
HOW? DO YOU KNOW WHERE THE LAB IS?
DO YOU, ZERA?
WE ONLY KNOW IT'S SOMEWHERE IN OUR HOMELAND.
YOU STAR HAWKS COULD COME THERE AND FIND IT... I KNOW YOU WON'T!
YOU'RE WRONG ABOUT THAT...
...WE WILL GO WITH YOU!
KANE GOULART 12-30
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WHEN I LEARNED THE SECRET OF THE DUSTGUN HAD BEEN SMUGGLED OUT OF THE COVERT LAB...
...I WENT AFTER IT!
THE WHEREABOUTS OF THAT LAB SETUP IS WHAT WE HAVE TO FIND OUT.
ZERA AND I ONLY KNOW IT'S SOMEWHERE IN FARMLAND #5.
HOWEVER, THERE ARE PEOPLE WE CAN GET MORE INFORMATION FROM.
LOOKS LIKE WE GO TO FARMLAND #5 AND DO SOME HUNTING, CHAVEZ.
OKAY BY ME, REX. FARM GIRLS TEND TO BE NIFTY-LOOKING.
KANE GOULART 12-31
HAVE YOU TWO GOONIES TAKEN LEAVE OF YOUR SENSES?
STAR HAWKS DON'T COLLABORATE WITH RABBLE ROUSERS AND ROWDIES!
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The Menomonee Falls Gazette

THE STAR HAWKS ARE EN ROUTE TO THEIR SKYCAR...
YOU GOOFS NEED YOUR NOGGINS EXAMINED!
TEAMING UP WITH THIS PAIR OF DESPERATES!
IF THERE IS A HIDDEN WEAPONS LAB IN THE FARMLAND #5 AREA, SNIF, WE HAVE TO FIND IT!
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PERHAPS YOU OUGHT TO LISTEN TO HIM, REX.
HE'S A MACHINE... HE HAS TO GO BY THE BOOK.
KANE GORMAN
1-1-78
I'M SURE YOUR HOOSEGOW WON'T APPROVE OF YOUR COMING TO MY HOMELAND.
ZAM!
THEY HAVE A LONG-STANDING HABIT OF NOT APPROVING OF ME, ZERA SO, I'M NOT TOO---
TINKERS AGAIN!
PLAYING JIGSAW WITH OUR SKYCAR!

THE TINKERS HAVE RECURRED AND ARE INDULGING IN THEIR PASSION FOR DISMANTLING MACHINERY...
ZAM! OUR SKY-CAR LOOKS LIKE INVENTORY DAY IN A ROBOT WORKS!
SCRAM, YOU SIMPS!
ROWR! HIT THE ROAD!
KANE GORMAN
1-2
© 1978 by HEA, Inc.
YOICKS! WHY THIS BRAVADO?
THESE ARE THE SHRABS WHO UNDID ME!
RUN 'EM OFF!
QUICK! BEFORE THEY GET THEIR PILFERING PAWS ON ME AGAIN!

STAR HAWKS
by Ron Goulart & Gil Kane

SCAT! DEPART!
GO ON, YOU GUYS! LEAVE OUR SKYCAR BE!
THE TINKERS DID A VERY EFFICIENT JOB OF FOULING US UP, CHAVEZ!
KANE GOULART 1-3
HOY, REX, THEY EVEN DISMANTLED MY LUNCHBOX.
THERE'S A BRIGHT SIDE TO THIS, CHUMS...
...NOW YOU WON'T BE ABLE TO GO TRAIPSING OFF AFTER THESE TWO DESPERADOES!
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PERHAPS THESE TINKER CREATURES HAVE NOT HARMED OUR SKYCAR.
LOOK, TORBIN! IT'S INTACT!
GOOD, LITTLE ONE.
WE CAN TAKE YOU ALL TO OUR HOMELAND WITH US.
KANE GOULART 1-4
HOOEY! I BET THEY'RE PLAYING SOCCER WITH YOUR GYROS RIGHT NOW!
ONE OF US WILL HAVE TO STICK WITH OUR DISABLED BUGGY, REX.
WANT TO FLIP A COIN?
YOU STAY, CHAVEZ.
I'LL GO WITH THE GIRL.
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The Menomonee Falls Gazette

THE TWO STAR HAWKS HAVE AGREED THAT CHAVEZ WILL STAY BEHIND...
ENJOY YOUR JAUNT, REX.
I DON'T MIND BEING MAROONED IN THIS DREARY WILDERNESS.
WE'RE BOTH SLAVES TO DUTY, REMEMBER?
WAVE GOLANT 1-5
I JUST WISH MY DUTY INVOLVED MORE SPLENDID-LOOKING LADIES AND FEWER ROBOT HOUNDS.
A STAR HAWK RESCUE SHIP WILL BE HERE BY TOMORROW, CHAVEZ. THEN YOU CAN JOIN US IN FARMLAND #5.
BOTH YOU GUYS OUGHT TO STICK HERE...
...INSTEAD OF GALAVANTING AROUND WITH THESE WACKIES!
DON'T BE SUCH A GROUCH, SNIF... WAVE GOODBY.
NERTZ! IF I HAD A THUMB, I'D PLANT IT AGAINST MY SNOOT!
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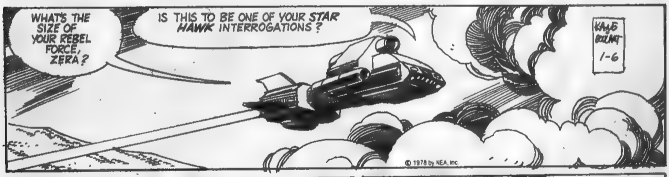

WE DON'T KNOW MUCH ABOUT EACH OTHER...
...WE OUGHT TO, SINCE WE'LL BE WORKING TOGETHER.
AH, THEN IT'S MY LIFE STORY YOU WANT... AND NOT MERELY STATISTICS.
WELL, IT'S A VERY SIMPLE STORY...
...THE REGIME KILLED MY PARENTS -- AND NOW I INTEND TO KILL THEM!

STAR HAWKS
by Ron Goulart & Gil Kane

WELL, MY FATHER WAS A MEMBER OF THE FORMER GOVERNMENT OF EMPIRE 13...
IT WAS A GOOD GOVERNMENT, AS GOVERNMENTS GO.
AFTER THE COUP HE WAS OUT.
HE WAS A FINE MAN, REX... VERY INTELLIGENT.
FANE QUINT 1-7
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BUT HE WAS MUCH TOO NAIVE.
HE THOUGHT HE COULD OPENLY SPEAK OUT AGAINST THE NEW REGIME.

MY FATHER DIDN'T UNDERSTAND... THEY'D NEVER ALLOW HIM TO SPEAK OUT AGAINST THE REGIME!
CYNO MANS 1-8
"THEY ROUNDED HIM UP... AND MY MOTHER,TOO... THEY SENT THEM TO THE PRISON FARM..."
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"...SHE LASTED A MONTH BEFORE SHE DIED..."
"MY FATHER... HE WAS TOUGH AND STRONG...HE LIVED OVER A YEAR..."

The Menomonee Falls Gazette

FLYING LOW TO AVOID DETECTION, THE REBEL GIRL'S SKYCAR ARRIVES IN HER HOMELAND...
THIS WAS ONCE RICH, VITAL FARMLAND, REX...
...BEFORE THE REGIME'S TROOPS SWEPT THROUGH!
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YOU HAVEN'T TOLD ME HOW LONG YOU'VE BEEN FIGHTING AGAINST THEM, ZERA.
NEARLY SIX YEARS...
...EVER SINCE MY PARENTS WERE TAKEN TO THE PRISON FARM TO DIE!
KING CROWN 1-9
"THE TROOPS CAME FOR ME, TOO, TORBIN, A CLOSE FRIEND OF MY FATHER, DECIDED TO LOOK AFTER ME."
"HE'D BEEN A MILITARY MAN BUT THERE WAS NO PLACE FOR HIM IN THE NEW REGIME... FOR DIFFERENT REASONS WE WERE BOTH OUTCAST'S NOW."

"OPPOSITION GREW, REBEL GROUPS FORMED... AFTER A TIME I CAME TO LEAD ONE."
YOU TOLD ME ABOUT WHAT HAPPENED TO YOUR FAMILY, ZERA... BUT WHAT ABOUT TORBIN'S?
WELL... HE...
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THERE IS NO MORE TIME FOR TALK, LITTLE ONE...
WE ARE NEARLY AT OUR DESTINATION!

STAR HAWKS
by Ron Goulart & Gil Kane

WE'LL CONCEAL OUR SHIP, REX...
...THEN TAKE YOU TO OUR CAMP.
I DON'T LIKE TO NAG, ZERA...
...BUT WE SEEM TO BE HEADED FOR A COLLISION WITH THE MOUNTAINSIDE.
YOU REALLY MUST LEARN TO TRUST ME.
KANE GOULART 1-11
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VERY FEW KNOW OF THESE HIDDEN CAVERNS, REX.
...AND MOST WHO DO SHUN THEM.
KANE GOULART 1-12
OH, SO? AND WHY IS THAT, ZERA?
THERE ARE... WELL, THE LOWER LEVELS AREN'T SAFE.
BUT WE WILL HAVE NO TROUBLE HERE.
BY NIGHTFALL WE'LL TAKE YOU TO OUR CAMP!
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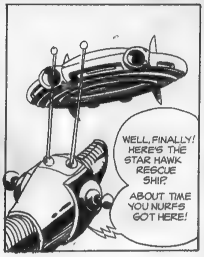
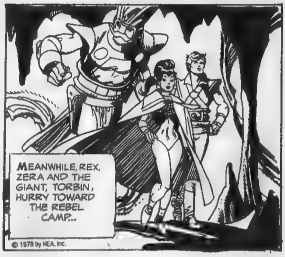
The Menomonee Falls Gazette

DEEP IN THE JUNGLES OF EMPIRE 13...
HOY, WHAT A WAY TO SPEND MY BIRTHDAY!
EVEN ROBINSON CRUSOE HAD A LIVELIER TIME THAN THIS.
KRAUS GOLDEN 1-13
BANANA OIL! HE DIDN'T HAVE ANY INTELLECTUAL COMPANIONSHIP...
BUT YOU'VE GOT ME, CLEANHEAD!

REX TAKES OFF WITH THAT NIFTY-LOOKING ZERA. I BABYSIT OUR BUNGEED-UP SKYCAR!
YOU'RE DARN LUCKY YOU DIDN'T GO WITH THAT BOMB-THROWER!





STAR HAWKS
by Ron Goulart & Gil Kane

I CAN HOLD THESE FOOLS OFF WHILE YOU GET ZERA AWAY, REX!
HURRY, USE THE DOWN TUNNEL!
BUT WE CAN'T GO THIS WAY, TORBIN!
BECAUSE OF THE NIGHTMEN!
KANE GOULART 1-15
IT'S OUR BEST CHANCE TO GET CLEAR!
I'LL JOIN YOU SOON...
NOW GO QUICKLY, LITTLE ONE!
I DON'T--
COME ON! WE'LL TAKE TORBIN'S ADVICE!
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IN THE CAVERNS THE GIANT TORBIN HOLDS OFF THE REGIME TROOPERS WHILE...
WE CAN'T LEAVE HIM TO FIGHT ALONE!
HE KNOWS WHAT HE'S DOING, ZERA. COME ON!
KANE GOULART 1-16
RUN, LITTLE ONE, QUICKLY!
I WILL JOIN YOU SOON!
GOOD! WE HAVE HIM NOW!
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The Menomonee Falls Gazette

TOO MANY REGIME TROOPERS, TOO MANY SHOCKWHIPS EVEN FOR THE POWERFUL TORBIN...
KRAK!
A SHOCKWHIP COILS ABOUT TORBIN'S NECK.
KRAK!
TOPPLING LIKE A GIANT TOWER, TORBIN CRASHES TO THE CAVERN FLOOR UNCONSCIOUS...
KANE GOULART 1-17
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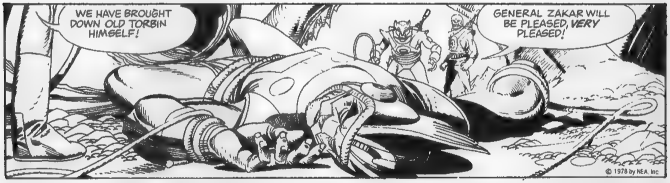

ZERA AND THE STRANGER FLED INTO THAT DOWN TUNNEL, CAPTAIN!
YES, BUT WE WON'T PURSUE THEM.
KANE GOULART 1-18
I DON'T BELIEVE THESE TUNNELS ARE SAFE, ARE THEY?
NO ONE CAN SURVIVE DOWN THERE...NOT EVEN ZERA!
TORBIN ISN'T FOLLOWING US, REX.
BUT NEITHER ARE THE TROOPS.
I DON'T THINK THEY DARE.

STAR HAWKS
by Ron Goulart & Gil Kane

WE'LL CONVEY TORBIN TO THE PRISON FARM.
AND AS FOR ZERA...
YOU NEEDN'T WORRY ABOUT HER. SHE'S AS GOOD AS DEAD!
THEY MUST HAVE CAPTURED TORBIN. WE HAVE TO GO BACK, REX, AND...
NO, THERE ARE TOO MANY TROOPS.
WE CAN'T RESCUE HIM WITHOUT HELP.
CAN WE REACH YOUR CAMP THROUGH THESE TUNNELS, ZERA?
THERE IS A WAY, YES.
IF THE NIGHTMEN LET US!
WHO ARE THEY, EXACTLY?
I'M AFRAID YOU'RE ABOUT TO FIND OUT!
LANE & GOULART 1-19
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AS REX AND ZERA FLEE TOWARD THE REBEL CAMP...
LANE & GOULART 1-20
IN THE JUNGLES OF EMPIRE 13 CHAVEZ IS BEING RESCUED, MORE OR LESS...
HOY, I MIGHT HAVE KNOWN THE HOOSEGOW'D SEND SOMEBODY LIKE YOU, TUSHING.
WELL, WHAT SORT OF COSTLY AND EXPENSIVE MESS HAVE YOU AND JAXAN MADE THIS TIME, AGENT CHAVEZ?

SOME TINKERS HAD THEIR WAY WITH OUR SKYCAR...
APPARENTLY YOU HAVEN'T READ BUDGET MEMO #203-A
WHERE'S THE NEW SKYCAR YOU BROUGHT?
I HAVEN'T. NO. BUT I MUST JOIN REX IN...
WE NO LONGER HAND OUT SPARE SKYCARS. INSTEAD WE REPAIR OLD ONES!
WE'LL REMAIN HERE UNTIL YOUR SKYCAR IS FIXED, CHAVEZ.
ZAM! THAT COULD TAKE A COUPLE OF DAYS!
AT THE VERY LEAST, YES.
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THIS'D BE A GOOD TIME FOR YOU TO TELL ME WHY EVERYBODY'S AFRAID OF THE NIGHTMEN.
THEY LIVE IN DARKNESS... DEEP IN THESE CAVERNS.

THEY FEED ON WHATEVER THEY CAN GET...
... BUT THEY PREFER FLESH!
OH!

REX, IT'S THEM!
YEAH, I FIGURED AS MUCH!

THEY'LL TRY TO...
ZERA!
BONK!
KANE GIANT
1-21
© 1978 by NEA, Inc.

ZERA?
BLAST, SHE'S OUT COLD!

SHE SAID ONE OF THESE TUNNELS LED TO SAFETY.
UP TO ME TO FIND IT.

THIS OBVIOUSLY IS NOT THE WAY TO THE EGRESS

WELL, WHEN YOU CAN'T RETREAT...
...YOU'VE GOT TO STAND AND FIGHT!
KANE GIANT
1-22
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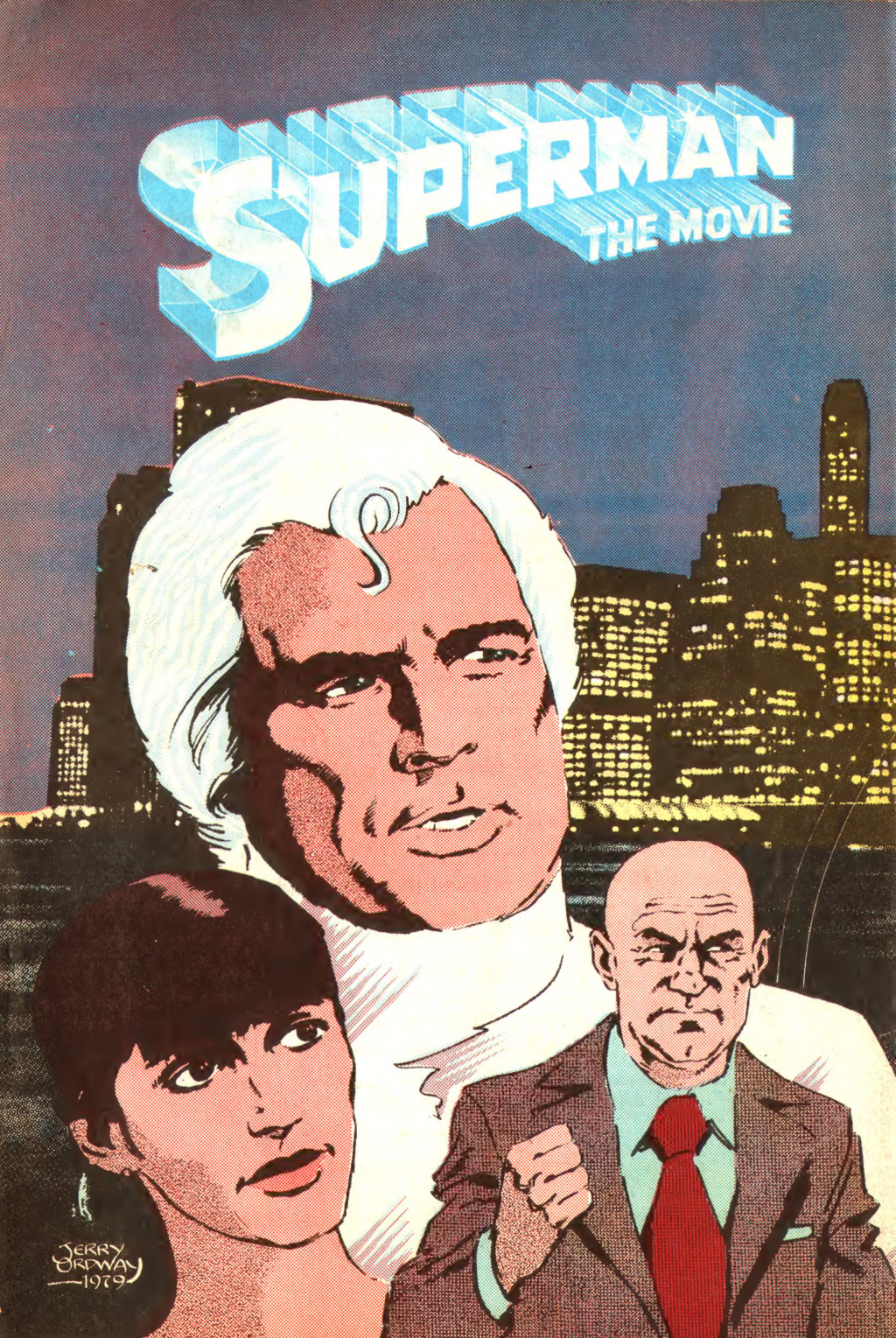
SUPERMAN
THE MOVIE
JERRY ORDWAY
1979